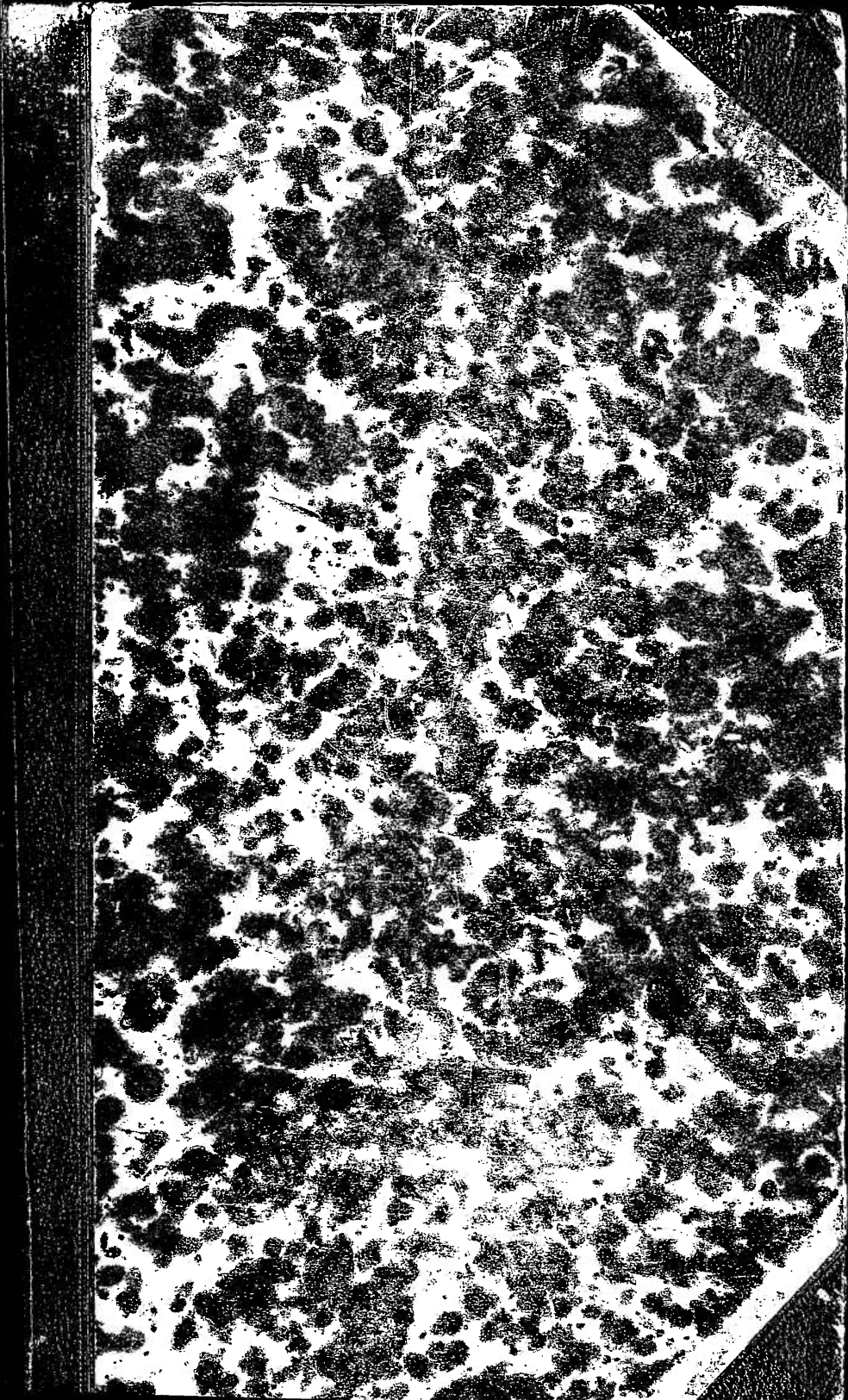




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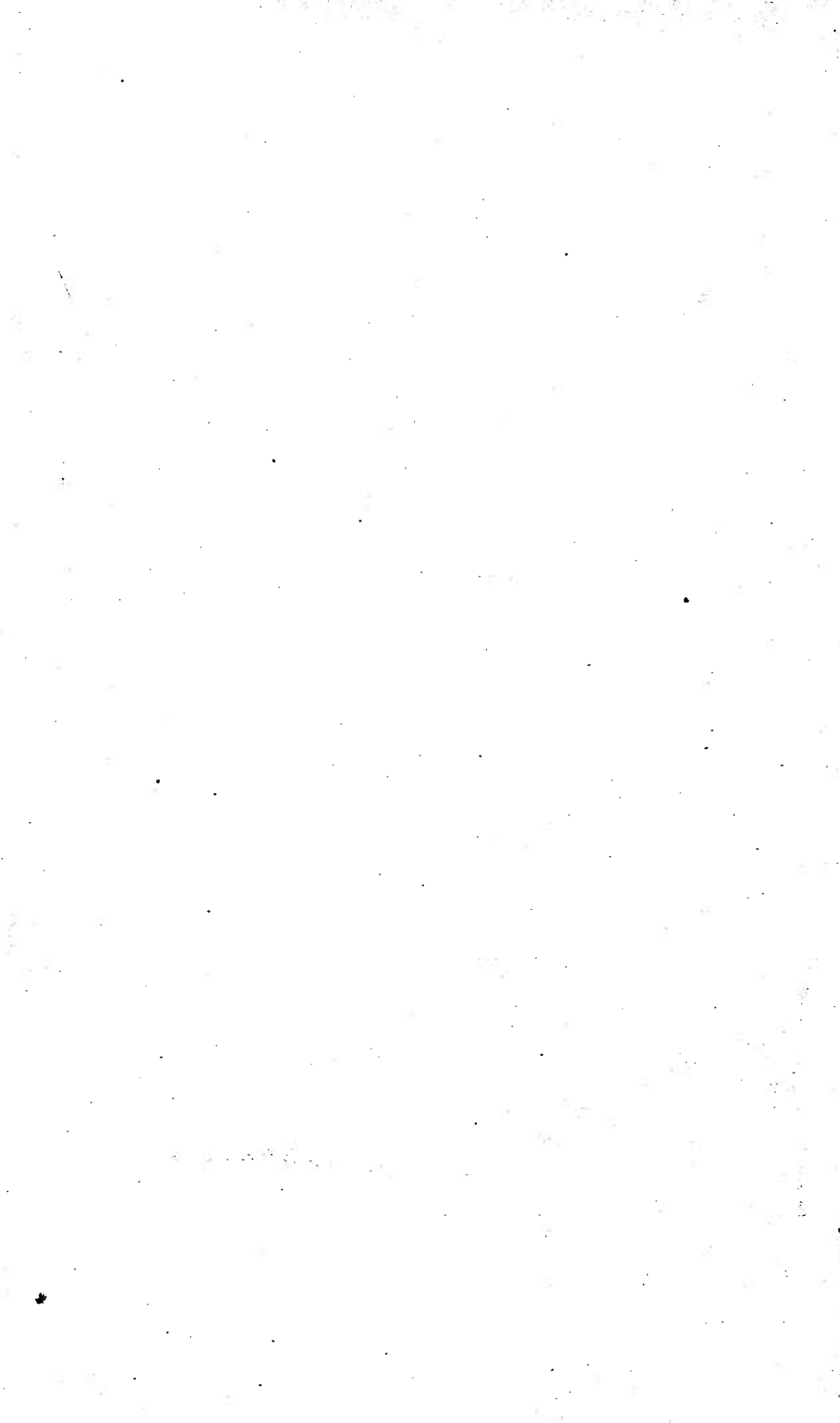
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7/12

RHANTISM VERSUS BAPTISM,

OR

INFANT SPRINKLING

AGAINST

CHRISTIAN IMMERSION;

IN WHICH

THE ARGUMENTS FOR THE FORMER PRACTICE
ARE EXAMINED AND CONFUTED,

AND

THE *SCRIPTURAL* AUTHORITY FOR THE LATTER
CLEARLY EXHIBITED.

IN THE FORM OF A TRIAL.

BY

SEACOME ELLISON,

AUTHOR OF A LETTER TO JOSEPH JOHN GURNEY, ESQ.

Καὶ πᾶς ὁ λαὸς ἀκούσας, καὶ οἱ τελῶναι ἐδικαίωσαν τὸν Θεόν,
ΒΑΠΤΙΣΘΕΝΤΕΣ τὸ **ΒΑΠΤΙΣΜΑ** Ἰωάννου.

"And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being
BAPTIZED with the BAPTISM of John."—LUKE vii. 29.

Προσεληλύθατε διαθήκης νέας μεσίτη Ἰησοῦ, καὶ αἵματι
ΠΑΝΤΙΣΜΟΥ κρείττονα λαλοῦντι παρὰ τὸν Ἀβελ.

"Ye are come to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the
blood of SPRINKLING, that speaketh better things than that of Abel."—
HEB. xii. 22. 24.

Baptist Union Theol. Sem. Coll.

LONDON;

PUBLISHED BY GEORGE WIGHTMAN.
WAUGH AND INNES, EDINBURGH; GEORGE GALLIE, GLASGOW;
D. MARPLES AND CO., LIVERPOOL.

1835.

BV 813
E 47

Horn.
Church of the Ascension

D. MARPLES AND CO., PRINTERS, LIVERPOOL.

PREFACE.

THE present Publication has been undertaken after looking over the works of several eminent theological writers, in which the validity of the rite of Infant Baptism is stated, and warmly defended.

Upon a candid and deliberate view of the subject in all its bearings, and an impartial examination of the arguments by which this doctrine and practice are supported, it appeared to me that the whole was founded on error; and that neither great talents nor literary acquirements were requisite to show this in a clear light.

On a comparison of the arguments used by the different Authors in support of this rite, and for the overthrow of the ordinance maintained by the Baptists (so called), I found that not any two were agreed upon the meaning, or the application, of the Scriptures brought forward in confirmation of their opinions; and that each one not only differed with most of his fellows, but very frequently with himself, in one part or other of the same work. From whence I inferred, that little more was required to show the fallacy of their system than to place their respective arguments and opinions in juxta-position, by which their discrepancies would become apparent. This I thought might be most effectually accomplished by bringing the controversy on the subject of Baptism before the public in the form of a Trial in a court of judicature, which plan I have adopted. I have taken for the foundation of the trial,

the Scripture fact, that the Lord of life and glory has, by his last Will and Testament, which he commanded to be published to all the world, bequeathed unto his children infinitely great and glorious blessings : I have endeavoured to show—that none but his true and legitimate offspring can lay any claim to the heavenly treasure ;*—that there is no way of proving our legitimacy, and by consequence establishing our title to this patrimony, but by acquiring a perfect knowledge of the Will—its precepts and requirements, the covenants it contains, and the privileges it confers ;—and that this knowledge, to be of any avail, must be of that influential kind which evinces itself by a uniform practical conformity to all its provisions.

I have supposed the two parties, the Pædobaptists and the Baptists, to be claimants under the same Will, each questioning the other's title—each endeavouring to establish an exclusive right. The former, being the most numerous and influential, I have made the Plaintiffs—the latter, the Defendants.

After giving a general view of the controversy, in the assumed capacity of Counsel for the Plaintiffs (the chief of the statements being taken from writers on that side), the several authors whose works I have consulted are introduced in succession, as Witnesses in support of the allegation contained in the speech, each one being supposed to give his evidence *in propria persona*, as we find the subject treated in his work ; the extracts from which are very copious, and are given verbatim, nothing being omitted which in my estimation could in any way affect the argument. This method (though it has much increased the size of my book) I thought desirable, as the reader will find in it an epitome of ALL that has been written in favour of Infant Sprinkling. Although I have not omitted anything of importance that I found in the works mentioned, on this par-

* See John iii. 5.

ticular subject, yet it cannot be supposed that I have given every sentence which they contain; nevertheless, I have not designedly suppressed any thing that made in favour of their cause: and, if my opinion may be taken, I conceive a reader, having gone through the evidence as given on the trial, will arise from the perusal of it with as perfect an understanding of the subject as if he had read every syllable of the works from which the extracts are made; with this advantage, that he will have escaped the labour, and consequent weariness, of wading through a great mass of irrelevant and uninteresting matter, and the subject will be more vividly impressed upon his mind.

The Authors' names, the titles of their works, and the order in which their evidence is given, are as follow :

First Witness, Rev. ADAM CLARKE, LL.D. F. A. S.; Commentary on the New Testament.

Second Witness, Rev. WILLIAM BURKITT, M. A.; Expository Notes upon the New Testament.

Third Witness, Rev. RICHARD MANT, D. D., M. R. I. A., Chaplain to His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury (now Lord Bishop of Down and Connor); Two Tracts, intended to convey Correct Notions of Regeneration and Conversion.

Fourth Witness, Rev. THOMAS SCOTT; Holy Bible, with explanatory Notes; and his Life, by his Son.

Fifth Witness, Rev. TIMOTHY DWIGHT, S. T. D., LL. D.; System of Theology.

Sixth Witness, Rev. RALPH WARDLAW, D. D.; Dissertation on Infant Baptism, second edition.

Seventh Witness, Rev. GREVILLE EWING; an Essay on Baptism.

Eighth Witness, Rev. MICAIAH TOWGOOD; Dissertations on Christian Baptism—recommended by the Revds. DAVID BOGUE, D.D., J. CLAYTON, sen., B. CRACKNALL, D. D., J. DUPRE, D. D., T. DURANT, T. HAWES, LL. B., M. D., J. HOOPER, A. M., S. LOWELL, T. RAFFLES, D. D., LL. D., J. P. SMITH, D. D., and W. THORPE.

Ninth Witness, Rev. RICHARD WATSON; Theological Institutes.

Tenth WITNESS, Rev. JOHN STEWART, D.D.; A Letter addressed to Mr. HENRY PAICE.

Every one who will take the trouble to examine the originals, may judge of my impartiality; and should it be found that I have suppressed any thing that would materially have weighed against my views, I trust the candour of the reader will not impute it to design; but to the weakness of human nature, which makes us blind to our own errors, while we are peculiarly quick-sighted in discovering those of others.

After giving the extracts from these several works (which the reader may pass over, if he please, as they do not affect the argument), I have, in the assumed character of Counsel for the Defendants, recapitulated, and put under distinct heads, the remarks of the several authors upon each passage of Scripture supposed to favour or oppose their particular views; so that in this part of the work there is a repetition of all the arguments which are of any weight, upon which I have taken the liberty to comment freely, and, as will doubtless be thought by some, with too much acrimony. Upon a subject of such infinite importance, however, it would ill become me (being confident that I have the Scriptures on my side) to "*speaking smooth things*," or treat the matter lightly. I am defending the cause of truth against those who would throw a veil over it, and have not been very ceremonious in the use of terms.

Having thus canvassed the arguments of my opponents, I enter upon my defence, in which I state my views of baptism—its importance and divine origin, deduced wholly from THE BIBLE—the infallible record, in which we find every thing given in such plain, positive, decisive language, that none can (except wilfully) misunderstand it; and I trust the contrast which this presents to the probabilities, the possibilities, the doubts, perplexities, evasions,

contradictions, and conflicting sentiments of our opponents, will show on which side the truth lies. After this, I give a brief account of my own experience, in the character of a Witness for the Defendants; and conclude with a short address to the Court and Jury, in the assumed character of Judge.

I do not come forward as the advocate of the Baptists, either Particular or General — open or strict communion-ists, — their conduct, with few exceptions, being in many respects indefensible. They are justly and ably reprovèd in a work lately published, entitled, “Modern Immersion not Scripture Baptism:” and, however much I differ from the author in his main subject, I perfectly agree with him in his strictures upon those whom he calls his BAPTIST BRETHREN, for whose edification I transcribe a sentence or two from the work.

“By adopting the plan of OPEN COMMUNION, they practically concede the validity of our baptism, as respects both the mode and the subject. As they profess to act only from plain examples or apostolical precepts; and as they can find neither in the New Testament for receiving persons at the Lord’s table, after Christian baptism was instituted, who in the judgment of the first Christians were not baptized, we must take it for granted, notwithstanding all their evasions on this subject, that they consider Pædobaptists really baptized. The majority of the Antipædobaptists are advocates for STRICT COMMUNION, and consequently will suffer no Pædobaptist to sit down with them at the Lord’s table, because in their opinion he has not been baptized. In this they act in harmony with their own scheme of interpreting the Sacred Volume in respect of positive institutions, seeing, as said before, they can find no precedent in the New Testament for admitting people to this sacrament who, in the judgment of the apostles, were not scripturally baptized. These very persons, however, will admit Pædobaptists into

“their pulpits, and listen with delight to their discourses —
 “will cordially unite with them in prayer, and singing the
 “praises of God. But can they find any precedent for such
 “a practice? Did the apostles adopt or sanction such a
 “procedure? Will our brethren point out an instance, in
 “which the first and inspired ministers of Christ tolerated
 “persons whom they deemed unbaptized to preach in their
 “churches, or to lead the devotional services of their solemn
 “assemblies?”

But I come forward to vindicate the ordinance of the house of God, as instituted by himself, established by his beloved Son, and administered by, or through the direction of, the apostles; and as the subject has employed the pens of the ablest writers on both sides, I pretend not to have made any new discoveries. My object has been to maintain the truth of God, to divest the subject of the mysteries in which it has been involved, and to place it in a somewhat different point of view; “not with enticing words of man’s wisdom,” for I possess neither an inventive imagination, nor power of language; but I am sensible it cannot suffer even in my feeble hands, for “God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are.”*

I am aware that I am pursuing an unpopular course—that I entertain opinions which will be derided, even by many who agree with me in the general view of the subject—that my hand is against every man, consequently every man’s hand will be against me. Yet I am not disheartened by this; but am bold to declare—that I make faith in our Lord

* 1 Cor. i. 27, 28.

Jesus Christ, *i. e.* faith in the true and proper sense of the word,—that which “worketh by love,” which is manifested in the first place in the ordinance of baptism, as stated in the New Testament,—a *sine quâ non* of Christianity; that no unbaptized person can be in a scriptural sense a Christian; and that whoever sets light by this ordinance, or substitutes any thing in its place, cannot, according to the Divine Testimony, be a genuine professor of the gospel, however celebrated his character, or however numerous his adherents. Our Lord declares, “He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved;” and the apostle says, “with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation;” * that “without faith it is impossible to please God;” † and that “whatsoever is not of faith is sin.” ‡ All religious rites and ceremonies, therefore, performed or observed by any individual before he is the subject of faith, are declared to be sinful, and consequently hateful to God. Such is the case with Infant Sprinkling. Here I take my stand; and until the passages just quoted are expunged from the Bible, I maintain that those who practise that rite practise it in violation of the laws and ordinances of that Book, and thereby take upon themselves an awful responsibility.

I may be thought singular in these particular views; indeed I know few persons, if any, who go with me to their full extent, and estimate so highly the importance of this ordinance: but if there were not another person in the world who thought with me, that would neither shake my faith, nor abate my confidence in what I have advanced. I do not pin my faith upon any man’s sleeve; nor call any man master. My opinions are not gathered from the writings of men—they are the result of a diligent searching of the Word of God; and I feel I must either retain them or renounce the

* Rom. x. 10.

† Heb. xi. 6.

‡ Rom. xiv. 23.

authority of the Scriptures, for there appears to me no alternative.

When I commenced this controversy, six of the Authors whose works I have brought forward were living; the subsequent decease of two of them has occasioned no alteration in my plan. I have made no distinction between the living and the dead. And although I have been very free in my animadversions upon their works, yet I bear them no ill-will; on the contrary, I wish that they and all their adherents should be happy, both in this life and in that which is to come. But I know that the only way of insuring happiness is by a scriptural regard to the commands of God; without which there can never be any *true* peace of mind. This is what I have endeavoured, to the best of my ability, to inculcate in the following work; and if only one soul shall, through this means, be brought to rely wholly on the Divine Testimony, it will be of more importance than to "gain the whole world;" and for all the time and labour I have spent, I shall consider myself abundantly rewarded.

As I before observed, I may be thought singular in my opinions: whether there be any who perfectly accord with me in every thing that I have here advanced, I have yet to learn. I therefore implicate no man, nor body of men; every individual who shall read my book may decide for himself how far he can go with me, and whether I have departed from the standard of Divine Truth, by which Standard only we shall be judged.

Litherland, near Liverpool,

July, 1835.

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ERRATA.

Page 402, line 25, for "it was those only," read "it was *not* those only."

Page 402, line 29, for "that apostle," read "*the* apostle."

Page 497, line 32, for "benefit to unbelievers," read "*no* benefit to unbelievers."

THE TRIAL.

MY LORD, AND GENTLEMEN OF THE JURY,

I feel myself highly honoured in being selected from among all my learned brethren to plead this great cause before you, which I may very properly, by way of preeminence, designate THE CAUSE, for it is without a parallel. Compared with this, all the causes that have heretofore been brought before a court of judicature sink into insignificance, and appear less than nothing and vanity. Notwithstanding, I do flatter myself that I shall be able to bring it to a successful issue; particularly as I see before me an enlightened and impartial judge, and an attentive and intelligent jury; who will, I am persuaded, do my clients strict justice.

This cause has agitated the world for nearly eighteen hundred years; and although the generality of christians have long been reconciled to the views which we take of it, there are still a few individuals, composing a small, illiterate, factious party, who by arrogating to themselves the right of private judgment, in opposition to the decision of the learned of all ages, continue the agitation, and have prevented its being wholly set at rest. For as often as my clients endeavour to show unto the world the errors of their opponents, so often one or other of them attempts to counteract their design, and sometimes in so specious a manner as to make our cause appear at least questionable. To bring, then, the controversy to a termination, to silence for ever the party, and to consign to oblivion them and their delusive

doctrines, is the object for which I present myself before you.

This trial, Gentlemen, arises out of a difference of opinion entertained, as I have before stated, by two opposite parties, on the express meaning of two particular clauses in a Will or Testament, which conveys the richest gifts ever bequeathed to man. I believe it is the opinion of many of the defendants, and some even go so far as positively to assert, that unless the commission be executed according to the strict letter of the Will, or in that particular way in which they contend the great Testator designed that it should be observed, the party so neglecting, or refusing to comply, or substituting any other thing, does thereby forfeit all his right and interest in the said Will. And further, they affirm that the particular clauses in question are expressed in language so plain and familiar, and in terms so direct and positive, that none but such as are either wilfully blind or perversely obstinate can put thereon any other construction, than that which to them appears to be their plain, simple, and obvious meaning. But it will appear in the course of this trial, from the evidence I shall be able to adduce, (supported by the greatest authorities in the land, and by men the most celebrated in every country in Christendom for learning, erudition, and deep research, who have flourished throughout the whole of the period that this cause has been the subject of discussion,) that the clauses in question do admit of a different construction, and may be differently interpreted.

The first of the clauses to which I allude, is thus expressed in the Will—"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."* The second, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."† Now, Gentlemen of the Jury, before I proceed any further, it will be necessary to inform you of the manner in which my clients have proceeded to acquire a knowledge of the

* Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

† Mark xvi. 16.

general bearing of the Will, and of these intricate clauses in particular; which has been as follows. The greatest portion of them, under the special favour and protection of, and aided by, the state, have joined together, and spared neither expense nor labour to ascertain their true meaning. For this purpose, towns have been set apart, and sumptuous colleges have been erected and richly endowed, for the instruction of youth; to which the nobles and rich men of the land have sent, and still continue to send, their sons. To be well instructed in the nature and design of this Will has been thought a matter of such importance, that, to induce the youths to study it with diligence and attention, the highest offices of the state are proposed to them as rewards for their attainments therein; and the greatest honours that the king can bestow are conferred upon the most eminent, even the dignity of taking precedence of all the nobles of the land.

With such inducements to study, and such advantages as these, it is natural to conclude that they, and they only, are likely to attain a correct understanding of the clauses; and we accordingly find that, with few exceptions, they have been unanimous in declaring that the word "baptize," in the said clauses, signifies no more than the sprinkling of a few drops of water upon the face of an infant, which they contend is the baptism therein commanded, and that in this manner it is effectually administered. And in order to make the second clause accord with the first, three persons, named sponsors, are appointed, who are denominated godfathers and godmothers; if the child be a boy, two of the former and one of the latter; if a girl, two of the latter and one of the former; and these, at the christening of the child, engage to believe for it, become its sureties, and promise in its name that it shall renounce the devil and all his works, and conduct itself in a manner becoming an heir of the great promise. Should the child be healthy, there is a clause limiting the term of this guarantee to the period when it shall become of age; but if it should be of a sickly constitution, this clause is then omitted; I presume, on the

supposition that the child is not expected to live. Now, Gentlemen, I appeal to you if any better scheme could possibly be devised by man? For all the children of parents of this persuasion are assured of their heirship; while, on the contrary, if left to themselves (as our opponents, I understand, mean to argue that they ought to be), perhaps not one of a thousand of those who are now considered as faithful observers of all the precepts of the Will would so much as conform to the very first of its requirements. This shows the necessity and utility of our plan; and the great advantage of it is, that when they die, they are reckoned a part of one great family, and their remains are interred with the following endearing declaration of the minister—"We commit the body of our DEAR BROTHER to the ground, 'in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life.'" In daily witnessing this last ceremony, those present are led to see, that all so dying are in reality the true heirs appointed by the Will. What a consoling circumstance to all the by-standers, to know that, in their turn, the same thing will be said of each of themselves! Thus you see, Gentlemen, that my clients show the same christian charity to all their members; and this they are constrained to show, for it would be "a conceit which revelation warrants not, and which reason and experience disclaim," to have two kinds of services for baptized christians. They therefore in every instance "meekly beseech the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ to raise us from the death of sin unto the life of righteousness; that when we shall depart this life, we may rest in him, as OUR HOPE IS THIS OUR BROTHER (OR SISTER) DOTH." Could we, Gentlemen, have greater inducements than these, to be attached to our beloved church, and to uphold her to the utmost of our power?

All my clients, however, are not exactly of one opinion—they differ in trifling things; a portion of them, instead of sending their children to the public colleges, send them to private academies, which they think answers the same purpose; they sprinkle their infants, but with some of them sponsors are dispensed with; though I am informed, in such

cases, that it is understood, or implied, that the parents take upon themselves the responsibility, though not under the name of sponsors.

Others again make a difference in children; they make their qualification for induction into this heavenly family to depend upon the faith of their parents. Some of these, instead of sprinkling, pour water upon their infants, but only on such whose parents they denominate believers. Yet, although there is this difference among my clients, the majority of them allow each other a claim under the Will.

Gentlemen, my clients do not bring forward this cause, because they feel any doubt of their claim. They are satisfied that they are the true heirs; they therefore do not wish to have their minds disturbed. They are neither envious nor jealous; on the contrary, they seek your verdict to confirm their claim, in order to convince their misguided opponents that they take a wrong view of the Will; that they do not understand its requirements; and, consequently, that their claims are not legitimate. We wish it as a means of opening their eyes; as a means of showing them that they are in the wrong path; in order that they may retrace their steps, and return into the bosom of mother church, or into that of some of her daughters, whose views of the Testator's ordinance are much alike, although their form of worship differs; any of which, I think I may with safety say, would receive them back with open arms; asking few or no questions, either why they had dissented from them, or why they saw good to return to them. Now what can be more liberal than the conduct of my clients, especially as they are by far the most numerous, the most intelligent, the most learned, and the most respectable party? Indeed I might say that we are almost the only party, for our opponents are little more than "as the small dust of the balance."

You may then ask, Why moot the question, seeing our adversaries are so very few as to be scarcely worthy of notice? I will inform you, Gentlemen; few as they are, they are a troublesome sect, the general disturbers of our

peace and quiet. If they would enjoy their own opinions, without obtruding them upon others, and let us take our own way, all would be well; but this they will not do. They, as I before observed, are continually contradicting our statements, and thus their doctrines obtain publicity, which occasionally coming to the ears of some of my weak and hypochondriacal clients, excite such an enquiry as this—‘Ah, if I should not be right, what will become of me?’ It is true their fears generally subside with the return of their good spirits; yet if we should be able to set this question at rest, it will be a consummation which we devoutly desire; and I make no doubt that your verdict will accomplish this great and good work.

I am sure there has been enough said and written on this subject to convince any body of people, who could be convinced at all, that they are in error; but our opponents are an opinionated, and, generally speaking, an illiterate party. Few of them know any language except their mother tongue, and many of them scarcely that; yet they have the vanity to think that they have arrived at a better comprehension of the true meaning of the Testator than all the great and learned men of the nation. Nothing more, then, can be done with such an obstinate sect; to reason with them is next to useless; and we have little expectation that even the decision of this court will produce any effect upon their understanding. Yet, Gentlemen, your verdict in our favour will answer three good purposes. In the first place, it will lull to rest and peace the doubts and fears of our weaker brethren, who have incautiously listened to their ensnaring counsels. In the second place, it will prevent others from being led away in a similar manner. And in the third place, it will be a means of enabling us to pass the remainder of our days in tranquillity.

This trial, strictly speaking, is only upon the two fore-mentioned clauses; yet the whole of the Will is of such vast importance, that in the course of the proceedings other clauses, bearing upon this question, will be brought more or less under your consideration. I wish you, however, to keep

your attention principally fixed upon these two. The Will has been so generally published, that almost every one in this country, who is desirous, may be made acquainted with its provisions. Yet it has been doubted by some, whether it would be wise to let the unlearned form their own opinions of the nature of its contents. Others think it the better plan, that they should receive instruction through those who have made it the particular study of their lives; and they argue that it is not possible that the illiterate can understand that which but few men of the greatest learning have yet attained unto. I myself have heard a great deal on the subject of this Will, and have often looked into it; but I must confess that I do not clearly understand it; and though I believe I have an equal interest therein with others, I have hitherto, in a great measure, submitted my judgment to those whose peculiar business it is to instruct me. Indeed I feel very thankful that I am under the care of that church, which makes members of all indiscriminately who are brought unto it in their infancy; and as their power to do this is shown to rest upon the best authority, I have no anxiety on my own part upon this subject.

Many of my clients do not confine themselves to the Will alone as a directory for their conduct, they look also to the manner in which it was acted upon by those who immediately followed the companions and personal adherents of the Testator. And for further instruction, they take the opinions and practices of succeeding generations, which have been carefully handed down even to the present time. In this, I think they manifest their wisdom, as well as their modesty; and I am sure you will agree with me, that this is the best mode that could be adopted, and more likely to conduce to a correct judgment in the case, than by pursuing the opposite principle, that of rejecting all human authority, and confining themselves entirely to the Will, seeing that it was published nearly eighteen hundred years ago, and that in a language now nowhere spoken by any people. My witnesses will, in the course of the trial, point out to you several little words, apparently of trifling signification,

but which they have found to be of the first importance ; for by giving them a different construction from that in which they now stand in the text, and to which they are naturally convertible, several passages connected with these two clauses obtain a meaning very different from that which is generally put upon them by the ignorant. They will also shew, that even the word "baptize" itself has no precise significant meaning when applied to the ordinance in question, but may with the greatest propriety be substituted for other words of the same language, conveying a very different sense. Thus, when my clients sprinkle a child, though the Greek language supplies them with a word that expresses the act with the utmost precision, they still use the word baptize, because it is the word employed by the Testator : but it will appear evident to you all, Gentlemen, by what shall further be advanced, that the meaning of this word cannot be determined from the Will itself ; and this, as I before hinted, proves their wisdom. The terms of the Will, then, being given in ambiguous language, the only way that we can arrive at a certain knowledge of its true bearing is by an appeal to antiquity, in order to ascertain how it was understood and acted upon in those early times ; and to do this, I am happy to say we are prepared. Besides, we have a very striking fact for our guidance ; which is, that we can prove to a certainty, that, nearly four thousand years ago, Jewish infants were circumcised, by the command of God, when they were eight days old, and thus brought into covenant with him ; and that all that were proselyted to their religion were also circumcised. Now it appears, from ancient history, that the Jews made additions to the command, purely of their own invention ; and to the ceremony of circumcising their proselytes, they added that of baptism, or they washed them, sprinkled, or poured water upon them — history does not particularly specify which : but it appears that when the great Testator came into the world, he saw good to abrogate the Jewish rite of circumcision, which was observed by the command of God, and to retain that use of water which the Jews observed upon

mere human authority; thus graciously accommodating the laws and institutions of the new kingdom which he came to establish to the predilections of the people among whom he came. For he was well aware, from the obstinacy which they had always shown, that if he had attempted to establish any new order of things he should not succeed with them even in this case. Hence many of our wise and learned men call baptism only a borrowed rite, and say, that as the Testator took up and continued that rite which the Jews had established without any direction or command; so they, in like manner, may attach that meaning to the word baptize which may best suit the prevailing customs and tastes of the several countries of the world, thus adapting it to the tempers of all mankind.

This being the case, Gentlemen, my clients contend that 'as regards institutions and ceremonies of order, the' Will 'proclaims its own insufficiency. The apostle enjoins upon the brethren to submit themselves to the rulers, which would be worse than useless, if the rulers had no lawful authority to command any thing beyond the letter of the Scripture.—The reason and mercy of this are obvious, in a religion which was designed to extend to the north and the south, to the east and the west; a religion which was to gather its converts from the most cultivated, and the most barbarous of human tribes, and assemble its congregations in every varying latitude, from the burning sands of Guyana and Peru to the icebergs on the coast of Norway.

'It follows, then, that the' Will 'was never designed to be a sufficient guide in all the details of management in the church of Christ. It is all-sufficient in principle. It invests the church rulers with true authority to enter into details, and it binds the members of the church to yield submission to the details so prescribed, though they be not written in the' Will.—'Therefore general orders are indispensable as the ground-work of delegated authority. To THIS INFIRMITY OF HUMAN MANAGEMENT THE LORD HAS CONDESCENDED, IN THE HISTORY OF HIS CHURCH. He has employed the instrumentality of human rulers.—General

orders are given in the' Will: 'delegated authority is entrusted to the rulers of the christian church: and every regulation, every ceremony of the church, decreed by those rulers (and not contradicted by Scripture), comes to the mind, and commands the obedience, of a christian churchman as if it were a precept of Scripture—so long as the laws and ceremonies introduced by the ruler are confined to matters which the' Will 'has left undetermined, or wholly unnoticed, they are to be obeyed for conscience' sake, by all christian men.'—Therefore, 'we ought to acquiesce in such rules as have been agreed upon by common consent, and which are recommended to us by long practice, and that are established by those who have the lawful authority over us. Nor can we assign any other bounds to our submission in this case, than those that the Gospel has limited. *We must obey God rather than man*; and we must, in the first place, *render to God the things that are God's*, and then *give to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's*. So that if either church or state have power to make rules and laws in such matters, they must have this extent given them, that till they break in upon the laws of God and the Gospel we must be bound to obey them.

'But this, after all, is to make us the judges. In this one point undoubtedly it is. And to this end is the' Will 'put into our hands, not as an all-sufficient guide to supersede a living voice, a delegated authority, and a discretionary power; but as a rectifier, an infallible standard, in *opposition* to which, Christian governors ought not to command, nor Christian men to obey.—But,' Gentlemen, 'let no man imagine that he has any scriptural right to disobey a law of the state, or disregard a ceremony of the church (however he may personally dislike it, or however inexpedient, or absurd, or vexatious he may consider it), merely because there is nothing concerning it in the' Will. 'On the contrary, if there be nothing concerning it in the' Will, 'then it is clear it cannot be contradictory to the' Will: 'and in that case, the enactment of the ruler (as I have already proved) gives it the authority of the' Will 'itself.

‘Surely, then,’ Gentlemen, ‘I may anticipate your agreement with me in the conclusion, that the common cry against many of the ceremonies of the church, Where do you find them in the Bible? is altogether unworthy of a place in the disputation of Christian men of enlarged and enlightened minds. The question is not, Are these ceremonies prescribed in the Bible? but, Are they contradictory to the Bible? It is not, Have the rulers authority to act? but, Have they transgressed the scriptural limits of their authority?—

‘The church has scriptural authority to decree rites and ceremonies, *in addition* to what is contained in Scripture, provided there be nothing in them “*contrary* to God’s word written.”—Ceremonies in addition to, and not in opposition to the Bible, if decreed by the ruler, must be received, adopted, and practised, for the same conscience’ sake.—

‘To deny her this power, would be to supersede the use of the church altogether—the very purpose for which’ the Testator ‘instituted this society is defeated; since if she has any authority at all (which he expressly gave her), and has none in matters determined in Scripture, she must have it in things *undetermined* in Scripture.

—‘In matters of discipline, the positive institutions of the church *make* things right and wrong which were left undetermined in Scripture—to consider things which were originally indifferent, as indifferent *after* the church has enacted regulations respecting them, is an offence against Christ himself, the head of that body:—unreasonable and unscriptural is it in any man to say, I will not conform to such or such a ceremony of the church, because there is no mention made of it in the Scripture. He has the Bible in his hand, commanding him to obey the rulers of the church: the rulers say, Do this; and he replies, No, I will not do it, because it is not specified in the Bible! The soldiers and servants of the Gentile centurion shall rise up in judgment with such a man, and shall condemn him.’*

These are only a portion of the arguments that we have

* Rev. Hugh M’Neile, M.A.

to bring forward to combat the new fangled notion of our opponents, who deny the legality of sprinkling infants. When or whence they obtained the idea of baptism, I imagine cannot be ascertained. It seems to have dwelt in obscurity for a time, till at last it burst forth from its solitude in the sixteenth century, and made considerable progress in Germany, extending its influence into Holland, Britain, and other countries, in all of which it still maintains its ground.' I call it a new-fangled notion, because 'pædobaptism appears to be as ancient as the apostolic age, while anti-pædobaptism appears only a modern invention. In Dr. Wall's defence of his learned and elaborate History of Infant Baptism, he affirms, anti-pædobaptism does not appear to have been practised till after the middle of the eleventh century; and that by a people few, ignorant, and quickly converted.'

As the evidence from history enters so essentially into the merits of the question now before this court, I cannot do better than quote from the writings of the learned Dr. Osgood.

'We (says he) acknowledge, indeed, that during the ages of darkness which preceded the Protestant Reformation, the institution, as well as the doctrines, of Christ, were exceedingly corrupted by the mixture of human inventions. We learn from history the origin of these corruptions, and that, in each successive age, there were witnesses against them, whose testimony shews that they never were, even at the season of the thickest darkness, universally received. I shall now prove that infant baptism stands not on the foot of these corruptions, was not introduced on them, and during the course of many revolving ages was not scrupled by a single Christian. Of the writings of the primitive fathers, the immediate successors of the apostles, some scattered fragments only have reached modern times: yet in these fragments, we have unquestionable evidence that infant baptism was the general practice in the very century after the apostles. They had been dead about forty years when *Justin Martyr* published his "Apology," in which he mentions some "aged

Christians who were made disciples in or from their infancy." This is understood as implying that they were baptized, as that was the known method of making visible disciples. *Irenæus*, who was born before the death of St. John, is yet more full in his testimony. *Origen* was born about one hundred years after the decease of the apostles, and from whom we have these words: "The church received a tradition or order from the apostles to administer baptism to infants. About fifty years after this, or one hundred and fifty years from the apostles, baptism being then universally considered as supplying the place of circumcision, a question arose, whether it ought not, as circumcision was, to be deferred till the eighth day after the birth of the child. For the discussion of this question, a council of sixty-six bishops, or pastors of churches, were assembled at *Carthage*. In their result, they gave it as their opinion that 'baptism ought least of all to be referred to a new-born infant;' and as to its being put off to the eighth day, they add, 'there is not one that approves of it: it appears to us all, who are here met in council, far otherwise.' Undoubtedly some of the elders upon this council could remember what the practice of the church had been for seventy or eighty years before, at which period there were probably many living who were born within the age of the apostles, and who must have known what their practice had been. If the baptising of infants had not originated with the apostles, is it credible that all the churches of Christendom should have so soon and so universally departed from the apostolic institution? If so striking and notorious an innovation had been attempted, is it not beyond all belief that it should have been every where received, without a single objection from any of those myriads of saints, confessors, and martyrs who lived in the purest ages of the church?"

'The learned Dr. Wall, who inquired most accurately into this subject, says, "For the first four hundred years, there appears only one man, *Tertullian*, that advised the *delay* of infant baptism, in some cases; and one *Gregory*, that did,

perhaps, practise such delay, in the case of his own children: but no society, so thinking, or so practising, nor any one man saying, that it was unlawful to baptize infants. In the next seven hundred years, there is not so much as one man to be found, that either *spoke* for, or practised, any such *delay*, but all the contrary. And when, about the year 1130, one sect among the Waldenses declared against the baptising of infants, as being incapable of salvation, the main body of that people rejected their opinion; and those of them that held that opinion quickly dwindled away and disappeared, there being no more heard of who held that tenet, until the rising of the German Anti-pædobaptists, in the year 1522."

'This account, by Dr. Wall, brings us down to the æra of the Protestant Reformation. Amidst the commotions attendant upon that great revolution, sprang up the founders of the present sect of Anabaptists. "Soon after Luther's appearance," says Dr. Robertson, in his history of Charles V., "the rashness or ignorance of some of his disciples led them to publish tenets no less absurd than pernicious; which, being proposed to men extremely illiterate, but fond of novelty, and at a time when their minds were turned wholly towards religious speculations, gained too easy credit and authority among them. The most remarkable of their religious tenets related to the sacrament of baptism, which, as they contended, ought to be administered only to persons grown up to years of understanding, and should be performed, not by sprinkling them with water, but by dipping them in it. For this reason they condemned the baptism of infants, and, re-baptizing all whom they admitted into their society, the sect came to be distinguished by the name of Anabaptists. To this peculiar notion concerning baptism, they added other principles, of a most enthusiastic as well as dangerous nature. By a monstrous and almost incredible conjunction, voluptuousness was engrafted on religion, and dissolute riot accompanied the austerities of devotion. Luther, who had testified against this fanatical spirit on its first appearance, now deeply lamented its progress, and exposed the delusion with great strength of argument, as well as acrimony of style."

Not Luther only, but Calvin, Melancthon, Bullinger, Zuin-
glius, Gualter, Sleidan, Zanchy, and indeed all the eminent
reformers, united their voice in bearing solemn testimony
against the principles of this sect, reprobating them in terms
of great severity.

‘ Having found their way into England, some of them very
early appeared in America, formed a society at Swansea,
and another at Boston, in the year 1665. Of this last, Dr.
Mather relates, “that they admitted into their society per-
sons whom our churches had excommunicated for moral
scandal, and employed them as administrators of the two
sacraments.” From such an origin and such beginnings
has this sect arisen. If there be any truth in history, their
opinions are wholly modern, and unknown to antiquity. If
infant baptism be a human invention, and an absolute
nullity, as they pretend, it is certain that, three centuries
ago, there was not a society of baptized Christians in the
world, nor had been for many preceding ages. What then
are we to conclude? Did the church of Christ remain,
during the lapse of centuries, overpowered by the *gates of
hell*. If we could suppose this, yet would it not be more
difficult still to suppose, that it was at length recovered by
the madmen of Munster, the German Anabaptists ?

‘ Though the ’ Will ‘ itself be, at last, our only sure guide,
yet it is a satisfaction to know in what sense our fellow-
christians understand it with reference to any disputed points,
and how they have been understood by the church of Christ
in former ages : and if we be able, as in this ’ cause ‘ con-
cerning infant baptism, to trace the practice of it up through
all preceding ages to that of the apostles, it must be allowed
a strong presumptive argument in favour of its having origi-
nated with the apostles themselves.’

I have before told you, Gentlemen, that I have often
looked into this Will ; although, on my own account, I think
it unnecessary, being quite at ease respecting my future
prospects. Neither do I think it my province to enter into
it more fully ; my business is to point out to you the state of
the case, and to inform you, that we have custom and pre-

cedent on our side, which generally in this country decide most cases.—You must be well aware that this Will is divided into two parts, designated the Old and New Testament; these again are subdivided into different parts, called books; these again into chapters and verses, for the facility of reference to any particular part.—I think it well to mention this; as each of you is furnished with a copy, you can turn to the different passages quoted by the witnesses, and so each judge for himself of their bearing. I have studied the brief put into my hands with the greatest attention; and there find that my clients can bring forward such a mass of circumstantial evidence, as I am satisfied shall confound our opponents, and set the question at rest for ever.

I am persuaded, Gentlemen, the more you hear of this great Will or Testament, the more you will be convinced of its vast importance; for if it be possible to make it appear that those whose cause I advocate have no interest therein, it could not be a just one, as it would exclude from an interest in its bequests the majority of the christian world, which we are all certain could never have been the intention of the Testator. I am quite at a loss to imagine upon what ground my learned friend is going to take his stand, or what evidence his ignorant clients can supply to enable him to shake the testimony of my witnesses. I really feel sorry that he should have undertaken such a hopeless cause. Being young in the profession, he may probably think it will give him an opportunity of shewing his legal ingenuity; and that if he can succeed in making ‘the worse appear the better cause,’ he may thus obtain a legal reputation. I shall not take up more of your time, neither shall I think it necessary to appeal to you again, being confident that, from the evidence that will now be produced, you can do no other than give a verdict in my favour. I shall therefore call my witnesses, who will confirm by their evidence what I have stated to you, in this my humble and imperfect appeal.

FIRST WITNESS.

I, the FIRST WITNESS called in favour of the Plaintiffs, cannot appear before this honourable court, "without a measure of anxiety; for though perfectly satisfied with the purity of my motives, and the *simplicity* of my *intention*," I am far from flattering myself that the evidence that I am about to give will afford me pleasure. "The" court "will no doubt find" therein "many things *defective*, and perhaps some *incorrect*.—My endeavour to be as *concise* as possible," will, "no doubt, in several cases produce obscurity. Whatever errors may be observed must be attributed to my scantiness of knowledge, when compared with the learning and information necessary for" the required testimony on such a momentous trial.

"I shall bring every thing as much as possible within the reach of *comparatively simple people*, or those whose avocations prevent them from entering deeply into subjects of this kind;" and, in giving my evidence, "shall study rather to be *useful*, than appear to be learned." I have no other pretensions in coming before you than that the testimony I shall give may be "as a help to a better understanding of the *Scriptures*. If there be but a few spots, such as may be fairly attributed to human frailty, the" candour of the court "will pass them by, in favour of the general principle." And I trust it will not be thought irrelavant, if I state in few words the manner in which I have investigated those Sacred Writings.

"My education and habits from early youth led me to read and study the Bible, not as a *text-book* to confirm the articles of a *preconceived creed*, but as the *revelation* from God to man. Conscious that Translators in general must have had a *particular creed*, in reference to which they

would naturally consider every text; and this reference, however honestly intended, might lead them to glosses not always fairly deducible from the original words; I come before you to give my evidence as free from bias and sectarian feeling as possible.

“Those who have compared most of the European Translations with the original have not scrupled to say that the *English Translation of the Bible, made under the direction of King James the First, is the most accurate and faithful of the whole*. Nor is this its only praise: the Translators have seized the very *spirit* and *soul* of the Original, and expressed this almost every where, with pathos and energy. Besides, our Translators have not only made a *standard Translation*, but they have made their Translation the *standard of our language*: the English tongue in their day was not equal to such a work; but God enabled them to stand as upon mount Sinai, to use the expression of a learned friend, ‘and crane up their country’s language to the dignity of the originals, so that, after a lapse of two hundred years, the English Bible is, with very few exceptions, the standard of the purity and excellence of the English tongue. The *Original* from which it was taken is alone superior to the Bible translated by the authority of King James.’ *This is an opinion, in which my heart, my judgment, and my conscience coincide.*

“Notwithstanding all the helps which the various MSS. and ancient versions afford for the illustration of the sacred text,” this court must not imagine “that in those MSS and versions which do contain the *whole* of the sacred text there is any essential defect, in matters that relate to the *faith* and *practice*, and consequently to the *salvation*, of the Christian:—there is no such MS—there is no such version. So has the Divine Providence ordered it, that although a number of mistakes have been committed by careless *copyists*, as well as by careless *printers*, not one *essential truth* of God has been *injured or supprest*. In this respect, all is *perfect*: and the way of the Most High is made so plain, even in the poorest copies, that the wayfaring man, though!

a fool, utterly destitute of deep learning and critical abilities, need not err therein.

“THE NEW TESTAMENT, but which should rather be translated the NEW COVENANT, including a *testamentary declaration and bequest*, for this is precisely the meaning of this system of justice, holiness, goodness, and truth,—the term New Covenant seems to mean, that grand plan of agreement, or reconciliation, which God made between himself and mankind, by the death of Jesus Christ; in consequence of which, all those who truly repent and unfeignedly believe in the great atoning sacrifice are purified from their sins, and *united* to God.

“John was sent to prepare the way of the Lord, by preaching the doctrine of repentance, and was surnamed the baptist, because he required those to be baptized who professed to be contrite because of their sins.

“In what form baptism was originally administered has been deemed a subject worthy of serious dispute. Were the people *dipped* or *sprinkled* (for it is certain βαπτω βαπτίζω mean both)? They were all dipped, say some. Can any man suppose, that it was possible for John to dip *all the inhabitants of Jerusalem and Judea, and of all the country round about the Jordan*? Were both men and women dipped? for certainly both came to his baptism. This could never have comported either with safety or with decency. Were they dipped in their clothes? This would have endangered their lives, if they had not with them change of raiment; and as such a baptism as John’s (however administered) was in several respects a new thing in Judea, it is not at all likely that the people would come thus provided. But suppose these were *dipped*, which I think it would be impossible to prove, does it follow that in all the regions of the world men and women must be *dipped*, in order to be evangelically baptized? In the eastern countries, *bathings* were frequent, because of the heat of the climate, it being there so necessary to cleanliness and health; but could our climate, or a more northerly one, admit of this with safety for at least three-fourths of the year? We may

rest assured that it could not. And may we not presume, that if John had opened his commission in the North of Great Britain, for many months of the year he would have dipped neither man nor woman, unless he could have procured a tepid bath? Those who are dipped or immersed in water, in the name of the Holy Trinity, I believe to be evangelically baptized. Those who are washed or sprinkled with water, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, I believe to be equally so. If Christ embraced little children, why should not his church embrace them? why not dedicate them to God by baptism? whether that be performed by *sprinkling*, *washing*, or *immersion*; for we need not dispute about the mode: on this point, let every one be fully persuaded in his own mind. I confess it appears to me grossly heathenish and barbarous, to see parents who profess to believe in that Christ who loves children, and among them those whose creed does not prevent them from using infant baptism, depriving their children of an ordinance by which no soul can prove that they cannot be profited; and through an unaccountable bigotry or carelessness withhold from them the privilege of even a *nominal dedication* to God; and yet these very persons are ready enough to fly for a minister to baptize their child when they suppose it to be at the point of death.

“Here I would earnestly recommend” to the notice of this court “the observations made by Dr. Lightfoot, who has spoken well on the subject. ‘Both dipping and sprinkling are legitimate forms; and *either* may be used, as the consciences or religious prejudices of the parties may direct: but the *thing* itself, and its great reference, are of the utmost importance. Baptism is a standing proof of the Divine authenticity of the Christian religion.

“‘That the baptism of John was by plunging the body, (after the same manner as the washing unclean persons, and the baptism of proselytes, was,) seems to appear from those things which are related of him; namely, that he *baptized in Jordan*; that he baptized in *Enon*, because there was much water there; and that Christ, being baptized, *came up*

out of the water: to which that seems to be parallel, Acts viii. 38, *Philip and the Eunuch went down into the water, &c.* Some complain that this rite is not retained in the Christian church, as though it something derogated from the truth of baptism; or as though it were to be called an innovation, when the sprinkling of water is used, instead of plunging.

“ ‘That the notion of washing in John’s baptism differs from ours, in that he baptized none who were not brought over from one religion, and that an irreligious one too, into another, and that a true one. But there is no place for this among us, who are born *Christians*; the condition therefore being varied, the rite is not only lawfully, but deservedly, varied also. Our baptism argues defilement indeed;—but this is to be understood of our natural and sinful stain, to be washed away by the blood of Christ and the grace of God; with which stain indeed they were defiled, who were baptized by John. But to denote this washing by a sacramental sign, the sprinkling of water is as sufficient as the dipping into water, when in truth this argues washing and purification as well as that.

“ ‘Since dipping was a rite used *only* in the Jewish nation, and *proper to it*, it were something hard, if all nations should be subjected under it; but especially when it is neither necessary to be esteemed of the essence of baptism, and is moreover so harsh and dangerous, that in regard of these things it scarcely gave place to circumcision.

“ ‘We suppose that *men, women, and children* came to John’s baptism, according to the manner of the nation in the reception of proselytes; namely, that they, standing in Jordan, were taught by John; that they were baptized into the name of the Messias, who was now immediately to come; and into the profession of the doctrine of the gospel concerning faith and repentance; that they *plunged themselves* into the river, and so came out.

“ ‘To the objection, *It is not commanded to baptize infants, therefore they are not to be baptized*;—I answer, *It is not forbidden to baptize infants, therefore they are to be*

baptized: and the reason is plain; for when *pædobaptism* in the *Jewish* church was so known, usual, and frequent, in the admission of proselytes, that nothing almost was more known, usual, and frequent, there was no need to strengthen it with any precept, when baptism was now passed into an evangelical sacrament. For Christ took baptism into his hands, and into evangelical use, as he found it; this only added, that he might promote it to a worthier *end* and a larger use. The whole nation knew well enough that *little children* used to be baptized; there was no need of a precept for that, which had ever by common use prevailed. For since it was most common in all preceding ages that *little children should be baptized*, if Christ had been minded to have that custom abolished, he would have *openly forbidden* it. Therefore his *silence*, and the silence of the *Scripture* in this matter, confirms *pædobaptism*, and continues it to all ages.'

"Our Lord said to his disciples, 'Go ye therefore into all nations, baptizing them,' &c. Because I have the authority, and can send *whomsoever* I will, to do *whatsoever* I please — teach; make *disciples of all nations*; bring them to an acquaintance with God who bought them, and then *baptize them in the name of the Father*. It is natural to suppose, that adults were the first subjects of baptism; for as the gospel was in a peculiar manner sent to the Gentiles, they must hear and receive it, before they could be expected to renounce their old prejudices and idolatries, and come into the bonds of the Christian covenant. But certainly no argument can be drawn from this concession against the baptism of *children*. When the Gentiles and Jews had received the faith and blessings of the gospel, it is natural enough to suppose they should wish to get their children incorporated with the visible church of Christ; especially if, as many pious and learned men have believed, baptism succeeded to circumcision, which I think has never yet been disproved. The apostles knew well, that the Jews not only circumcised the children of proselytes, but also baptized them; and as they now received a commission to teach and

proselyte all the nations, and baptize them in the name of the Holy Trinity, they must necessarily understand that *infants* were included; nor could they, the custom of their country being considered, have understood our Lord differently, unless he had, in the most express terms, said, that they were *not* to baptize children; which neither he nor his apostles ever did. And as to the objection that the baptized were obliged to profess their faith, and that, therefore, only *adults* should be baptized, there is no weight at all in it; because what is spoken of such refers to those who only at that period of life heard the gospel, and were not born of parents who had been Christians; therefore they could not have been baptized into the Christian faith, forasmuch as no such faith was at their infancy preached in the world.

“ ‘*Teaching them to observe all things.*’ Men are *ignorant* of divine things, and must be *taught*. Only those can be considered as proper *teachers* of the ignorant, who are thoroughly *instructed* in whatsoever Christ *has commanded*. Persons who are entrusted with the public ministry of the word should take care that they teach not human creeds and confessions of faith, in *place* of the Sacred Writings; but those things, and those only, which *Jesus has commanded*.

“He that credits the gospel as a revelation from God, and *is baptized*, takes upon him the *profession* of it, obliging himself to walk *according* to its *precepts*: *he shall be saved*—redeemed from sin here, and brought at last to the enjoyment of eternal glory. *But he that believeth not shall be damned*, because he rejects the *only* provision that could be effectual to his soul’s salvation.

“It is said, Luke vii. 29, 30, ‘All the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. But the pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him.’ John preached that the divine wrath was coming upon the Jews, from which they might flee by repentance; chap. iii. 7. The Jews, therefore, who were baptized by him

with the baptism of repentance, did thereby acknowledge, that it is but justice in God to punish them for their wickedness, unless they repented, and were baptized in token of it. The will of God was, that all the inhabitants of Judea should *repent* at the preaching of John, be *baptized*, and believe in Christ Jesus. Now, as the pharisees and lawyers did not repent, &c. at John's preaching, so they did *not believe* his testimony concerning Christ: thus the *will*, gracious *counsel*, or *design* of God, relative to their salvation, was *annulled* or *frustrated*. They *disbelieved* his promises, despised the Messiah, and *disobeyed* his precepts.

"It was John's business to proclaim the *gospel of the grace of God*, and to point out that lamb, or *sacrifice of God, which takes away the sin of the world*. They were to repent, and be baptized, in *reference* to the remission of sins. Repentance prepared the soul for it, and baptism was the type and pledge of it.

"It is not clear that Christ did baptize any with water, but his disciples did; and what they did by his authority and command, is attributed to himself. It is a common custom in all countries, and in all languages, to attribute the operations of those who are under the government and direction of another, to him by whom they are directed and governed.

"John baptized in Ænon, because there was much water there.* Whether the ceremony was performed by *dipping* or *sprinkling*, this was equally necessary, when such multitudes were baptized. But as the Jewish custom required the person to stand in the water, and having been instructed, and entered into a covenant to renounce all idolatry, and take the God of Israel for their God, then *plunge themselves under the water*. It is probable the rite was thus performed at Ænon.

"In John iii. 5, Jesus says, 'Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.' So by the baptism of water a man was admitted, when he became a proselyte to the Jewish religion. The

* John iii. 23.

soul was considered as in a state of defilement, because of past sin; now, as by that water the body was washed, cleansed, and refreshed, so by the influences of the Holy Spirit the soul was to be purified from its defilement, and strengthened to walk in the way of truth and holiness. When John came baptizing with water, he gave the Jews the plainest intimations that this would not suffice; that it was only typical of that baptism of the Holy Ghost, under the similitude of fire, which they must all receive from Jesus Christ. See Matt. iii. 11. Those that have never had any other baptism than that of water, may take Jesus Christ's word for it, they cannot, in their present state, enter into the kingdom of God. It is Jesus *only* who baptizes with the Holy Ghost.* He who receives not this baptism, has neither right nor title to the kingdom of God; nor can he with any propriety be termed a Christian, because that which essentially distinguished the Christian dispensation from that of the Jews was, that its author *baptized* all his followers *with the Holy Ghost*.

“When Paul came to Ephesus, he asked ‘certain disciples, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?’ For it was the common privilege of the disciples of Christ to receive, not only the ordinary graces, but also the extraordinary gifts, of the Holy Spirit: and thus the disciples of Christ differed from those of John, and of all others. John baptized with water; Jesus baptized with the *Holy Ghost*. And to this day, the genuine disciples of Christ are distinguished from all false religionists, and from nominal Christians, by being made partakers of this Spirit; which enlightens their minds, and convinces of sin, righteousness, and judgment; quickens their souls, witnesses to their conscience that they are the children of God, and purifies their hearts.

“These Ephesians said unto Paul, ‘We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? and they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the

* John i. 33.

people, that they should believe on Him which should come after him, that is on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.”*

“As there is no evidence in the New Testament of persons being *rebaptized*, unless this be one, many criticisms have been hazarded to prove that these persons were not *rebaptized*. I see no need of this. To be a *Christian*, a man must be baptized into the *Christian faith*: these persons had not been baptized into that faith, and therefore were not Christians. They felt this, and were immediately baptized *into the name of the Lord Jesus*. This is a plain case: but let one instance be produced of a person being rebaptized, who had before been baptized in the name of the Holy Trinity, or even in the name of Jesus alone. In my view, it is an awful thing to *iterate baptism*, when it had been before *essentially* performed: by ‘essentially performed,’ I mean administered by *sprinkling*, *washing*, or *plunging*, by or in *water*, in the name of the Father, Son, and Spirit, being invoked at the time. Whoever has had this, has the *essence* of baptism, as far as it can be conferred by *man*: and it matters not at *what period of his life* he has had it: it is a substantial baptism, and by it the person has been fully consecrated to the Holy and Blessed Trinity: and there should not be an *iteration* of this consecration on any account whatever. It is totally contrary to the canon law; it is contrary to the practice of the purest ages of the Church of God; it is contrary to the New Testament; and tends to bring this sacred ordinance into disrepute.

“From Acts i. 5, we may learn, that baptism does not always mean being *plunged* or *immersed* in water; for as this promise most evidently refers to the communication of the Holy Spirit, which ‘*sat upon each as a cloven tongue of fire*,’ this certainly has more affinity to *sprinkling* than to *plunging*. However, the mode of administering the sign is of very little consequence; and which is the best mode, is exceedingly dubious. The stress should be laid on receiving *the thing* signified—the Holy Ghost, to *illuminate*,

* Acts xix. 1—5.

regenerate, refine, and purify the heart. With this, sprinkling or immersion are equally efficient: without this, both are worth nothing.

“A little further on in the Acts we are told, ‘then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added to them about three thousand souls.’ When a Jew had been baptized in the name of Jesus, it was the criterion of his conversion, and he was then excluded from all communication with his countrymen; and no man would have forfeited such privileges, but on the fullest and clearest conviction. These three thousand were not converted under *one discourse*, nor in *one place*, nor by *one person*. All the apostles preached, some in one language, and some in another; and not in *one house*; for where was there one, at that time, that could hold such a multitude of people? For out of the multitudes that heard, three thousand were converted; and if one in *five* was converted, it must have been a very large proportion. The truth seems to be this. All the apostles preached in different parts of the city, during the course of that day; and in *that day*, three thousand converts were the fruits of the conjoint exertions of these holy men.

“Then we have Philip asking the Eunuch, ‘Understandest thou what thou readest? and he answered, How can I, except some man should guide me?’ This is *no proof* that ‘the Scriptures cannot be understood without an authorised interpreter,’ as some of the papistical writers assert. How could the Eunuch know any thing of the gospel dispensation, to which the Scripture referred? That dispensation had not yet been proclaimed to him; he knew nothing about *Jesus*. But where that dispensation has been published, where the four Gospels and the Apostolic Epistles are at hand, every thing relative to the salvation of the soul may be clearly apprehended, by any simple, upright person. There are difficulties, it is true, in different parts of the Sacred Writings, which neither the *Pope* nor his *conclave* can solve; and several which even the more enlightened *Protestant* cannot remove: but these difficulties

do not refer to matters in which the *salvation of the soul* is immediately concerned ; they refer to such as are common to every ancient author in the universe. These difficulties, being understood, add to the beauty, elegance, and justness of the language, thoughts, and terms of expression ; and these, only the few who are capable of *understanding*, are able to relish. As to all the rest, all that relates to *faith* and *practice*, all in which the present and eternal interest of the soul is concerned, ‘the wayfaring man, though a fool [quite illiterate], shall not err therein.’

“After Philip had ‘preached unto him Jesus,’ ‘the Eunuch said, See, here is water, what does hinder me to be baptized ? Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest ; and he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the Eunuch : and he baptized him.’ (*They alighted from the chariot into the water.*) When Philip was instructing him, and he professed his faith in Christ, he probably plunged himself under the water, as this was the plan which appears to have been generally followed among the Jews in their baptisms : but the person who had received his confession of faith, was he to whom the baptism was attributed, as it was administered by his authority.

“The *baptism of the Spirit* did not *supersede the baptism by water* ; nor indeed can it. St. Peter commanded the Gentiles to be baptized, after they had received the Holy Ghost, see Acts x. 48 ; in other cases, they were baptized before, see Acts xix. 4—6, where the disciples who had received only the baptism of John were baptized again with *water*, in the name of the Lord Jesus : and after even this, the apostles *prayed*, and *laid their hands on them*, before they were made partakers of the Holy Ghost. So we find that Jesus had his *water baptism*, as well as John : and that even he who gave the *baptism of the Holy Ghost* required the administration of *water baptism* also. *Baptism*, as well as the *Supper of our Lord*, were intended not only to be means of grace, but standing, *irrefragable proofs* of the

truth of Christianity. To 'be baptized in the name of the Lord,' implied their *taking upon them the public profession of Christianity*, and believing in Christ Jesus as their Saviour and Sovereign.

"Paul, writing to the Romans, says, 'Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.'*

"Every man who believes the christian religion, and receives baptism as the proof that he believes it and has taken up the profession of it, is bound thereby to a life of righteousness. 'To be baptized into Christ' is to receive the doctrine of Christ crucified, and to receive baptism as a proof of the genuineness of that faith, and the obligation to live according to its precepts. 'Baptized into his death.' That as Jesus Christ, in his crucifixion, died completely, so that no spark of the *natural* or *animal life* remained in his body; so, those who profess his religion should be so completely *separated* and *saved from sin*, that they have no more *connexion* with it, nor any more influence from it, than a *dead man* has with or from his *departed spirit*.

"'We are buried with him by baptism into death.' It is *probable* that the apostle here alludes to the mode of administering baptism by *immersion*, the whole body being put *under the water*, which seemed to say, The man is *drowned*, is *dead*; and, when he came up out of the water, he seemed to have a *resurrection to life*; The man is *risen again*, he is *alive*! He was therefore supposed to throw off his old gentile state, as he threw off his clothes, and to assume a new character, as the baptized generally put on new, or fresh garments. I say it is *probable* that the apostle alludes to this mode of immersion; but it is not absolutely *certain* that he does so, as some do imagine; for in the next verse, our being incorporated into Christ by baptism is also denoted by our being *planted*, or rather *grafted, together in*

* Rom. vi. 3, 4.

the likeness of his death: and Noah's ark *floating* upon the water, and *sprinkled by the rain from heaven*, is a figure corresponding to baptism:* but neither of these gives us the same idea of the outward form as *burying*. We must be careful, therefore, not to lay too much stress on such circumstances. Drowning among the ancients was considered the most noble kind of death; some think the apostle may allude to this.

“Writing also to the Colossians, Paul says, ‘Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses.’ Alluding to the *immersions* practised in the case of *adults*, wherein the persons appeared to be buried under the water, as Christ was buried in the heart of the earth. His rising again the third day, and their emerging from the water, was an emblem of the resurrection of the body, and, in them, of a total change of life. They were quickened, changed, and saved, by means of faith in Christ Jesus; which faith was produced by the operation or energy of God. *Believing*, is the act of the soul; but the *grace* or *power to believe*, comes from God himself.

“The doctrine of the resurrection of our Lord was a grand doctrine among the apostles; they considered and preached this as the *demonstration of the truth of the Gospel*. The multitudes who embraced Christianity, became converts on the *evidence* of this resurrection. This resurrection was considered the *pledge* and *proof* of the resurrection of all believers in Christ, to the possession of the same glory into which he had entered.—The baptism which they received, they considered as an emblem of their *natural death* and resurrection.

“The sum of the apostle's meaning in 1 Cor. xv. 29, ‘What shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all?’ appears to be this; If there be no

* 1 Peter iii. 20, 21.

resurrection of the dead, those who, in becoming Christians, expose themselves to all manner of privations, crosses, severe sufferings, and a violent death, can have no compensation, nor any motive sufficient to induce them to expose themselves to such miseries. But as they receive baptism as an emblem of *death*, in voluntarily going under the water; so they receive it as an emblem of the *resurrection* unto eternal *life*, in coming up out of the water: thus they are baptized for the dead, in perfect faith of the resurrection.

“Ananias said to Saul ‘Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins:’ as much as to say, Take now the profession of Christ’s faith most solemnly upon thee, by being baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Let this washing of thy body represent to thee the *washing away of thy sins*: and know, that this *washing away of sin* can be received only by invoking the name of the Lord.

“In John i. 12, 13, we are told ‘As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name; which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God;’ who were regenerated, not of bloods—the union of father and mother, or of a distinguished or illustrious ancestry; for the Hebrew language makes use of the *plural*, to point out the dignity or excellence of a thing: and probably by this the Evangelist intended to shew his countrymen, that having Abraham and Sarah for their parents would not entitle them to the blessings of the new covenant; as no man could lay claim to them, but in consequence of being born of God: therefore, neither *the will of the flesh*—any thing that the corrupt heart of man could purpose or determine in its own behalf; nor the *will of man*—any thing that *another* may be disposed to do in our behalf, can avail here: this new birth must come through the *will of God*—through his own unlimited power and boundless mercy, prescribing salvation by Jesus Christ alone.

“‘There is no respect of persons with God.’* The

* Rom. ii. 11.

Righteous Judge will not act according to any principle of partiality; the *character and conduct* alone of the person shall weigh with him. He will take no wicked man to glory, let his nation or advantages be what they may; and he will send no righteous man to perdition, though brought up in the very bosom of *gentilism*. And as he will judge in that day according to *character and conduct*; so his judgment will proceed on the ground of the *graces, privileges, and blessings*, which they had received, improved, or abused. And as there is no respect of persons with God in judgment, so there can be none in the previous administration of his saving blessings; he that will be condemned for his unrighteousness, will be condemned on the ground that he had sufficient grace afforded him for the salvation of his soul: and his condemnation will rest on the simple principle, that he *abused the grace* which was sufficient to save him, by acting in opposition to its dictates and influence. No man, in that great day, shall be brought to heaven through any *partiality* of the Judge; and no man sent to hell because God did not afford him sufficient grace; or because he had made a *decree*, which rendered even his use of it ineffectual to his salvation. In reference to the great design of God in the salvation of man, it shall be said, in time, at the day of judgment, and throughout eternity, THERE IS NO RESPECT OF PERSONS WITH GOD.

“ ‘Jesus said’ unto Nicodemus, ‘Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born again when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother’s womb and be born?’ Every man must have *two* births—one from heaven, the other from earth; one of his body, the other of his soul: without the first, he cannot see nor enjoy this world; without the last, he cannot see nor enjoy the kingdom of God. As there is an absolute necessity that a child should be born into the world, that he may see its light, contemplate its glories, and enjoy its good; so there is an absolute necessity that the soul should be brought out of its state of darkness and sin, through the light and power of

the grace of Christ, that it may be able to see, or to *discern*, the glories and excellencies of the kingdom of Christ here, and be prepared for the *enjoyment* of the kingdom of glory hereafter. The Jews had some general notion of the *new birth*; but, like many among Christians, they put the acts of proselytism, baptism, &c., in the place of the Holy Spirit and his influence: they acknowledged that a man must be born again, but they made that new birth to consist in profession, confession, and external washing. But this *new birth* implies the renewing of the whole soul in righteousness and true holiness: it is not a matter that may be dispensed with: heaven is a place of holiness, and nothing but what is like itself can ever enter there. It is probable that Nicodemus was pretty far advanced in age at this time; and from his answer we may plainly perceive, that, like the rest of the Jews, and like multitudes of Christians, he rested in the *letter*, without paying proper attention to the *spirit*; the *shadow*, without the *thing signified*, had hitherto satisfied him. Our Lord knew him to be in this state, and this was the cause of his pointed address to him, ‘Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?’ Hast thou taken upon thee to guide the blind in the way of truth, and yet knowest not that truth thyself? Dost thou command proselytes to be baptized with water, as an emblem of a *new birth*, and art thou unacquainted with the *cause, necessity, nature, and effects* of that new birth? How many masters are there still in Israel who are in this respect deplorably ignorant; and, strange to tell, publish their ignorance and folly in the sight of the sun, by writing and speaking against the thing itself! It is strange that such people cannot keep their own secret.

“In the Acts of the Apostles,* we read, ‘A certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us; whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us saying, If ye have judged me

* Acts xvi. 14, 15.

faithful to the Lord, come into my house and abide there.' As she was a sincere worshipper of God, she was prepared to receive the heavenly truths spoken by Paul and his companions: and as she was *faithful* to the grace she had received, so God gave her more grace, and gave her now a divine conviction that what was spoken by Paul was true; and therefore *she attended unto the things*; she believed them, and received them as the doctrines of God; and in this faith she was joined by her whole family; and in it they were all baptized."

"Further down in the same chapter, we read of the conversation between Paul, Silas, and the jailor. 'Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake *unto him* the word of the Lord, and *to all* that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.' Thus, by teaching him, and all that were in his house, *the doctrine of the Lord*, they plainly pointed out to them the way of salvation; and it appears that he and his whole family, who were capable of receiving instructions, embraced the doctrine, and shewed the sincerity of their faith by immediately receiving baptism. And, by the way, if *he and all his were baptized straightway*,—immediately, instantly, at that very time,—it is by no means likely that there was any *immersion* in the case; indeed, all the circumstances of the case—the dead of the night, the general agitation, the necessity of despatch, and the words of the text,—all disprove it. The apostles, therefore, had another method of administering baptism, besides *immersion*, which, if practised according to the Jewish formalities, must have required considerable time, and not a little publicity. As the Jews were accustomed to receive whole families of heathens, young and old, as proselytes, by *baptism*, so here, the apostles received *whole families*, those of Lydia and the jailor, by the same rite. It is therefore

pretty evident that we have in this chapter very presumptive proofs—1st, That baptism was administered without *immersion*, as in the case of the jailor and his family; 2d, That *children* were also received into the church in this way; for we can scarcely suppose that the whole families of Lydia and the jailor had no children in them; and, if they had, it is not likely that they should be omitted; for the Jewish practice was invariably to receive the heathen *children* with their proselyted parents. The jailor *believed—brought them into his house—washed their stripes—and set meat before them.*

“ ‘Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house: and many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed, and were baptized.’ Crispus held an office of considerable consequence; and therefore his conversion to Christianity must have been very galling to the Jews. It belonged to the chief, or ruler of the synagogue, to preside in all assemblies, interpret the law, decide concerning things lawful and unlawful, punish the refractory, excommunicate the rebellious, solemnize marriages, and issue divorces; and ‘many of the Corinthians,’ to whom the sacred historian refers, were probably Gentiles, and were the fruits of the apostle’s labours, after he had ceased to preach among the Jews.

“ From 1 Cor. xvi. 15, we learn that ‘the family of *Stephanas*’ were the first converts in Achaia; probably converted and baptized by the apostle himself. They were the chief instruments of supporting the word of God in Achaia, of which work they themselves were the *first-fruits*.

“ Jesus Christ never saved a soul which he did not *govern*: nor is this Christ precious or estimable to any man who does not feel a spirit of *subjection* to the divine will. ‘And he called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever, therefore, shall humble himself, as a little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child, in

my name, receiveth me.’* As much as to say, ‘Unless you be saved from those prejudices which are at present so baneful to your nation, (seeking a temporal, and not a spiritual kingdom,) unless you be clothed with the spirit of humility, ye cannot enter into the spirit, design, and privileges of my spiritual and eternal kingdom. The name of this kingdom should put you in mind of its nature.—1. The king is *heavenly*; 2. His subjects are heavenly-minded; 3. Their country is *heavenly*, for they are strangers and pilgrims upon the earth; 4. The government of this kingdom is wholly spiritual and divine. Be as truly without worldly ambition, and the lust of power, as little children are, who act among themselves as if all were *equal*. So great is the disparity between the kingdom of Christ and the kingdom of this world, that there is no way of rising to honours in the former, but by humility of mind, and continual self-abasement. Thus our Lord shews them, that they were *all equal*, and that there could be no superiority among them, but what must come from the deepest humility: he intimates also, that wherever this principle should be found, it would save its possessor from seeking worldly honours, or earthly profits, and from seeking to be a *ruler* over his brethren, or a lord in God’s heritage. As our Lord considers a little child an emblem of a genuine disciple, so by the term ‘one such little child,’ he means a *disciple* only. ‘Whosoever will shew unto such a child-like, unambitious disciple of mine, any act of kindness for my sake, I will consider it as done to myself.’ But, on the contrary, ‘whoso shall offend one of these little ones,’—whosoever shall cause one of the least of those who believe in me to be stumbled—to go into the spirit of the world, or give way to sin,—such an one shall meet with the most exemplary punishment.

“Matthew tells us, † ‘Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them, and pray:....and the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven: and he laid his hands

* Matt. xviii. 2—5.

† Matt. xix. 13—15.

on them.' *Or the kingdom of heaven is composed of such.* This appears to be the best sense of the passage, and utterly ruins the whole inhuman, diabolic system of what is called non-elect infants' damnation; a doctrine which must have sprung from Moloch, and can only be defended by a heart in which he dwells. A great part of God's kingdom is composed of such *literally*: and those only who resemble little children shall be received into it. It was a common custom among the Jews to lay their hands on the heads of those whom they blessed, or for whom they prayed. This seems to have been done by way of dedication, or consecration to God—the person being considered as the sacred property of God ever after. Often, God added a testimony of his approbation, by communicating some extraordinary influence of the Holy Spirit. This rite has been long practised among Christians, when persons are appointed to any sacred office. But this consecration of children to God seems to have grown out of use. It is no wonder that the great mass of children are so wicked, when so few are put under the care of Christ, by humble, praying, believing parents. Let every parent that fears God bring up his children in that fear; and by baptism let each be dedicated to the Holy Trinity. Whatever is solemnly consecrated to God abides under his protection and blessing.

“ ‘The unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife:’* or rather is to be reputed as sanctified, on account of his wife; she being a *Christian woman*, and he, though an heathen, being by marriage one flesh with her; her sanctity, as far it refers to outward things, may be considered as imputed to him, so as to render their connexion not unlawful. The case is the same when the wife is an *heathen*, and the husband a Christian. The word sanctification here, is to be applied much more to the *Christian* state than to any moral change in the persons.

“ ‘Else were your children unclean.’ If this kind of relative sanctification were not allowed, the children of those persons could not be received into the Christian church, nor

* 1 Cor. vii. 14.

enjoy any right or privileges as *Christians*; but the church of God never scrupled to admit such children as members, just as well as she did those who had sprung from parents both of whom were Christians. The Jews considered a child born *out of holiness*, whose parents were not proselytes at the time of their birth, though afterwards they became proselytes. On the other hand, they considered the children of heathens born *in holiness*, provided the parents became proselytes *before* the birth.

“‘The children of Israel’ ‘were all baptized unto Moses’—rather *into* Moses—into the *covenant* of which Moses was the mediator: and by this typical baptism, they were brought under the obligation of acting according to the Mosaic precepts, as Christians receiving Christian baptism are said to be baptized *into Christ*, and are thereby brought under obligation to keep the precepts of the gospel.

“It is manifest from Scripture that the miraculous cloud in the wilderness performed a three-fold office to the Israelites. 1. It was a cloud in the form of a pillar, to direct their journeyings by day. 2. It was a pillar of fire, to give light to the camp by night. 3. It was a covering for them during the day, and preserved them from the scorching rays of the sun, and supplied them with a sufficiency of *aqueous particles*, not only to cool that burning atmosphere, but to give refreshment to themselves and their cattle; and its humidity was so abundant, that the apostle here represents the people as thoroughly sprinkled, and enveloped in its aqueous vapour; for he represents the whole camp as being *sprinkled*, or *immersed*, in the humidity of its vapours, and expressly calls it a being under the cloud, and being baptized by the cloud.

“Noah believed in God, walked uprightly before Him, and found grace in his sight; he obeyed Him in building the ark, and God made it the means of his salvation from the waters of the deluge. Baptism implies a consecration and dedication of the soul and body to God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He who is faithful to his baptismal covenant, taking God through Christ, by the Eternal Spirit, for his portion, is saved here from his sins; and, through the *resur-*

rection of Christ from the dead, as the well grounded hope of eternal glory. This is all plain: but was it the *deluge* itself, or the *ark*, or the *being saved* by that ark from the deluge, that was the *antetype* of which St. Peter speaks? Noah and his family were *saved by water*; *i. e.* it was the instrument of their being saved, through the good providence of God. So the water of baptism, typifying the regenerating influence of the Holy Spirit, is the means of salvation to all those who receive the Holy Spirit, in its quickening, cleansing efficacy. Now, as the waters of the flood could not have saved Noah and his family, had they not made use of the ark, so the waters of baptism saves no man, but as it is the means of his getting his heart purified by the Holy Spirit, and typifying to him that purification. The ark was not *immersed* in the water; had it been so, they must all have perished; but it was *borne upon the water*, and *sprinkled* with the *rain* that fell from heaven. This text, as far as I can see, says nothing in behalf of *immersion* in baptism; but is rather, from the circumstances mentioned" before, "in favour of sprinkling.

"I may be here allowed to notice, that it is worthy of remark, that in all the revivals of religion with which we are acquainted, God appears to have made very little use of human *eloquence*, even when possessed by pious men. 'Not with wisdom of words,' but by his own nervous truths, announced by plain common sense, though in homely phrase, have been the general means of the conviction and conversion of sinners. Human *eloquence* and *learning* have often been successfully employed in defending the *outworks* of Christianity; but *simplicity* and *truth* have preserved the *citadel*.

"As we have *one* only God, and *one* only *Saviour* and *Mediator* between God and man, and *one* only inspiring Spirit, so there is but *one church*, in which this ineffable Jehovah performs his work of salvation. That church, however scattered and divided throughout the world, is but *one* building, founded on the Old and New Testament; having but one *sacrifice*, the Lord Jesus, the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world.

“Of this glorious church, every Christian soul is an *epitome*; for, as God dwells in the church at large, so he dwells in every believer in particular; each is a *habitation of God through the Spirit*. In vain are all pretensions among sects and parties to the privileges of the church of Christ, if they have not the *doctrine* and *life* of Christ. *Traditions* and *legends* are not *apostolic doctrines*, and *showy ceremonies* are not the *life* of God in the soul of man.

“*Religion* has no need of human ornaments or trappings; it shines by its own light, and is refulgent with its own glory. Where it is not in life and power, men have endeavoured to produce a *specious image*, dressed and ornamented with their own hands. Into this God never breathed, therefore it can do no good to man, and only imposes on the ignorant and credulous, by a vain shew of lifeless pomp and splendour. This phantom, called *true religion*, and *the church*, by its votaries, is in heaven denominated *vain superstition*—the speechless symbol of departed piety.

“Under the dispensation of the Gospel, of which Christ Jesus is head and supreme, *neither circumcision*—nothing that the Jew can boast of, nothing that the *gentile* can call excellent—*availeth anything*, can in the least contribute to the salvation of the soul. ‘BUT A NEW CREATURE:’ *but a new creation*, not a new creature merely, (for this might be restrained to any *new power* or *faculty*,) but a total renewal of the whole man—of all the powers and passions of the soul; and as creation could not be effected but by the power of the Almighty, so this change cannot be effected but by the same energy; no circumcision can do this; only the power that made the man at first, can *new make him*. Thus, as the thorough conversion of the soul is compared to a *new creation*, and creation is the proper work of an *All-wise, Almighty Being*; then, this total change of heart, soul, and life, which takes place under the preaching of the gospel, is effected by the *power* and *grace* of God: this is *salvation*; and salvation must ever be of the Lord, and therefore men should apply to Him, who alone can work this wondrous change.”

SECOND WITNESS.

I, the SECOND WITNESS, think it "my highest ambition" to serve the plaintiffs. "A fervent desire to further their" cause "has put me upon redeeming the time for this work;" and, "as religion did always consist in an imitation of God, so we may imitate him now with much more ease and greater advantage, since his Son was manifest in the flesh and dwelt among us: for he was pleased to become man on purpose to shew us how we might become like unto God, by a daily imitation of his holiness. This consideration has induced me to set before" this court "the example of the Holy Jesus.—I must acknowledge I have constantly preached three times a week (besides occasionals), and visited as often a populous and a scattering parish from house to house: which has allowed me little, too little time" to give such an evidence as this important case requires; "and I heartily wish this duty had fallen upon some that had more leisure and greater abilities.—I do not" come before "you to deny the lawfulness of baptizing by immersion; but I cannot assert the absolute and indispensable necessity of it.—I do not oppose the lawfulness of dipping in some cases, but the necessity of dipping in all cases.

"The apostles and first planters of the gospel had a commission from Christ, to go among the pagan Gentiles, without limitation, to preach the gospel. The second branch of their commission was to *baptize*: where *observe* the encouraging promise made by Christ, 'he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved;' that is, he that receiveth and embraceth the gospel preached by you, and thereupon becomes a proselyte and disciple of Christ, and receives baptism, the seal of the new covenant, shall for all his former sins receive pardon, and, upon his perseverance,

obtain eternal life; but he that stands out obstinately and impenitently, shall certainly be damned. The two damning sins under the gospel are infidelity, and hypocrisy—not receiving Christ for their Lord and Saviour by some, or doing it feignedly by others. Happy are they in whom the preaching of the gospel produceth such a faith as is the parent and principle of obedience. *He that so believeth and is baptized shall be saved.* It is not said, He that is not baptized shall be damned; because it is not the want, but the contempt, of baptism that *damns*, otherwise infants might be damned for their parents' neglect.

“It is a vain thing to expect exemption from the judgments of God, because of outward privileges enjoyed by us. If we be not born again of the Spirit, it will avail us nothing to be born of Abraham's flesh; if Abraham's faith be not found in our hearts, it will be to no advantage to us that Abraham's blood is running in our veins.

“John admitted persons into the church by washing them with water—he baptized into the name of Christ who was to come; the apostles baptized into the name of Christ already come. The preaching of the doctrine of repentance is absolutely necessary, and the indispensable duty of every gospel minister. The baptism of repentance, says the learned Lightfoot, belongs to children, though they know not what repentance means, because it engages them to repentance when they come to years to understand that engagement; for thus it was with children circumcised, they became debtors to observe the whole law, though they knew not what the law meant, yet circumcision bound them to it, when they came to years of discretion.

“The publicans were baptized of John, and justified God, that is, they looked upon John as a prophet sent of God; they owned his ministry, received his message, and submitted to his baptism. Those who believe the message that God sendeth, and *obey* it, justify God; they who do not believe and obey, accuse and condemn God. But of the pharisees and lawyers it is said, ‘they rejected the counsel of God against themselves.’ And this rejection of Christ at

the great day, will render our condition worse than the condition of heathens that never heard of a Saviour; than the condition of Jews, which crucified their Saviour; yea, than the condition of devils, for whom a Saviour never was intended! The publicans and common people, being conscious to themselves of their sin and guilt, did approve of this counsel which God sent them by his messenger, and submitted to this baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, to which God by the Baptist now called them.*

“When Paul found certain disciples at Ephesus that were only baptized unto John’s baptism, but had not so much as ‘heard whether there be an Holy Ghost,’ they were not ignorant of the essence or person of the Holy Ghost, but had not heard of the effusion of the extraordinary and miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost; for it was a received opinion among the Jews, that, after the death of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, the Holy Ghost, or the spirit of prophecy, departed from Israel; and they never heard that he was returned, or of his being given anew with his miraculous gifts. Here Paul tells them that John’s baptism and Christ’s were the same for substance, and had both the same end, though they differed in some circumstances. The disciples of John believed in Christ to come, the disciples of Jesus believed in Christ as already come, and were baptized in that faith, and the ordinance sealed unto both the remission of sins; yet it being *essential* to Christian baptism, to baptize in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, thereby professing ourselves to be buried and risen with Christ, and John’s baptism having not this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus; that is, in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, which is the essence of Christian baptism.

“In the Epistle to the Colossians, ii. 12, the apostle compares baptism with the Jewish circumcision, and shews that the signification and spiritual intention of both was one and the same, obliging all persons who took the outward sign upon them, to put off the old man, and put on the new; to

* Luke vii. 29.

die unto sin, and live unto God. Accordingly, the ancients made use of divers ceremonies in baptizing adult and grown persons, thereby to represent the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Immersion, or putting the person three times under water, either as our Saviour was under the earth three days, or in allusion to the three persons of the Trinity, in whose name we are baptized; and likewise emersion, then coming up out of the water, resembling our Lord's arising out of the grave. Baptism under the new Testament succeeds circumcision under the Old, and is a rite of initiation to Christians, as circumcision was to the Jews; for the apostle here proves, that by virtue of our spiritual circumcision in baptism, we have no need of the outward circumcision in the flesh. *Baptism is undoubtedly Christ's ordinance for infants of believing Christians*, as circumcision was of old for the infants of believing Jews. For if, under the gospel, infants be not received by some federal rite into covenant with God, they are in a worse condition than children under the law; and the apostle could not truly have said, we *are complete in Christ*, that is, as complete without circumcision, as ever the Jewish church was with it, if we had not an ordinance, to wit, baptism, as good as their abrogated ordinance of circumcision. And the Jews would certainly have objected it to the reproach of christianity, had not the Christians had a rite of initiation for their children, as they had of circumcision, which sealed the covenant to themselves and their little ones, and was the door by which all persons entered into the Jewish church.

"In John iii. 22, 23, the ordinance of baptism is administered by the disciples, even in the presence of Christ himself; for 'Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples:' this is called the baptism of repentance, of which children, as well as others, were capable subjects, because baptism doth not require children's repentance at present, but engages them to repentance for the time to come; as children that were circumcised were obliged to observe the whole law, but could not perform it till they came to understand it.

"Baptism is a solemn ordinance and sacred institution of

Jesus Christ, which is not to be administered to any out of the Christian church, until they profess repentance, faith in Christ, and sincere obedience to him: and to persuade them to repent and be baptized, Peter tells them, ‘the promise is to you, and to your children,’ to you Jews of the seed of Abraham, and to your seed; and to as many of the Gentiles and their seed as shall be called by the preaching of the gospel to profess faith in Christ. By promise is meant the gracious covenant of God, whereby he offers pardon and peace to such as will accept them. This acceptance is two-fold—*cordial*; which entitles a person to all the benefits of the covenant, temporal, spiritual, and eternal: professional only; which entitles a person and his seed to church privileges only. Hence, when God takes believing parents into covenant with himself, he takes also their children or seed into covenant with himself likewise; and if so, then the seal of the covenant, which is baptism, ought to be applied to them. It is evident, that under the Old Testament children were in covenant with God, as well as their parents. And do we any where find that ever they were cast out under the gospel?

“As I before said, the second branch of the apostles’ power was to baptize in the name of the whole Trinity; ‘baptizing in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:’ where note, that all adult and grown persons are to be first taught and instructed before they be baptized. But it follows not from hence that the children of such parents may not be baptized before they are taught; for the apostles were to baptize all nations, of which children are a chief, if not the chiefest part. Besides, those that were proselyted to the Jewish religion, though before they were circumcised themselves they were instructed in the law of God, yet when they were circumcised themselves, their children were not denied circumcision at eight days old. In like manner, we have no reason to deny the children of baptized parents, who are in covenant themselves, the sign and seal of the covenant, which is baptism, God having assured his people that *he will be the God of them and of their seed*. If this privilege be denied, the children of

Christian parents are in a worse condition than the children of the Jews, and consequently infants are in a worse condition since Christ's coming than they were before, and the privileges of those that live under the gospel are straiter and narrower than of those that lived under the law. The third branch of the power which Christ delegated to his apostles, was by their ministry to press upon all their converts *an universal observance of, and obedience to, all his commands; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I command you:* where note, that preaching is the ordinary and instituted means to convert nations to God. That preaching must not only go *before* baptism, but follow after it. Obedience must be pressed upon, and practised by, all those that enter into covenant with God; otherwise they lie under a great condemnation.

“Some say, Christ did neither baptize infants nor command them to be baptized. That is not to be wondered at, if we consider that they had already entered into covenant with God by circumcision; and Christian baptism was not instituted; John's baptism was the baptism of repentance, of which infants were incapable.

“‘Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus; for as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ:’ then all believers are the children of God, because they are baptized into Christ, and have put on Christ; that is, they are admitted into the Christian church by baptism, they profess Christ's holy religion; and if they live as they profess, they put on Christ. Now, since the coming of Christ, there is no difference or discrimination between one nation and another, no regard to any national privileges, either of Jew or Gentile, no distinctions of conditions, either bond or free; or of sexes, either male or female; but, circumcised or uncircumcised, we are all one as good as another in respect of outward privileges, but being sincere believers we are all equally accepted of God in Christ. So that no external privilege nor prerogative whatever, without faith in Christ, is any whit available to salvation; none are debarred from Christ, nor more nor better accepted with him for any

of these things: both the circumcised and uncircumcised are his, if believing in Christ.

“The jailor was brought to see and acknowledge that the doctrine taught by Paul and Silas was the truth of the Eternal God; who by the miraculous earthquake testified unto him that they were his true and faithful servants, which led him to ask what he must do to attain salvation. They answered him, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved and thy house; that is, if you and your family receive the doctrine of Jesus Christ, and regulate your lives according to it, you shall be saved. Trembling sinners are always inquisitive; an awakened conscience will put a man upon enquiry, what he should do. And the chief thing which the trembling soul enquires after, is the business of salvation; they must be directed to Jesus Christ, and to faith in him, as the only way to obtain salvation by him. Now the jailor believing, he and his whole house were baptized. The apostle denied not baptism to the jailor’s household, upon the jailor’s sincere profession of the Christian faith; yet no doubt he promised to use his utmost endeavour to bring them to the knowledge and obedience of Jesus Christ. It is very improbable that the jailor and his household were baptized by dipping: we do not deny the lawfulness of baptizing by immersion, but we cannot assert the absolute and indispensable necessity of it. Paul, who was newly washed, and his sores dressed, occasioned by stripes, cannot be supposed either to go out himself, or to carry the jailor and all his family, in the dead of the night, to the river or a pond, to baptize them; neither is it in the least probable, that St. Paul himself was baptized by dipping: see Acts ix. 18, 19; ‘he arose and was baptized; and when he had received meat he was strengthened.’ The context may convince us that he was baptized in his lodging, being sick and weak, having fasted three days, and being in a very low condition; it was no ways probable that Ananias should carry him out to a river in that state, to plunge him in cold water. Dipping, then, surely cannot be so essential unto baptism, as for want of it to pronounce the baptism of all the reformed

churches throughout the world to be null and void, as some amongst us do.

“Although Christ converted Paul himself, yet Ananias, as his minister, must instruct him; by Christ is grace infused, but by his ministers increased.

“The work of the ministers of the gospel is now to witness for, hereafter to witness against; now they witness for God and his truth, and persuade sinners to believe it; hereafter they will witness against sinners, for not believing and obeying the truth of God. What a sad consideration is this, and with what a heart must a poor minister study, when he considereth that every sermon that he preaches must be brought in for a witness against many, if not most, of his hearers? The advice which Ananias gave to this new convert, to take upon him the badge of Christianity, to wit, baptism, was, ‘Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins.’

“Although baptizing was God’s ordinance, and St. Paul, as Christ’s minister, had a commission and sufficient authority to baptize; yet the providence of God so ordered, that he baptized very few, lest any should say he baptized in his own name. Among those few he baptized, here is a whole household mentioned, ‘the household of Stephanas.’ St. Paul makes honourable mention of Stephanas and his house; they were the first fruits of Achaia, *i. e.* the first there converted to Christianity. Lydia, by reason of her faith in Christ, having a right to baptism, all her family, upon her undertaking to bring them up in the knowledge of Christ, were admitted to the ordinance with her. The jailor and his house, Lydia and her house, are all baptized. The opening of the heart to receive Jesus Christ is the peculiar effect of the sovereign power and omnipotent grace of God. Where learn, as Abraham, and others under the Old Testament, were to bring their households into covenant with God by circumcision, so did those that had households under the New Testament endeavour to bring their whole families into God’s covenant by baptism. Paul is here making a comparison between baptizing and preaching (1 Cor. i. 14—17),

and the preference given to the one before the other: 'Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach;' that is, rather to preach than to baptize; this was his great business, his principal work; though baptizing was within his commission, yet it was not that, but preaching the gospel, to convert souls to Christ, that he was called after such a wonderful manner, and endued with such extraordinary gifts for the performance of it.

"*To be baptized into Christ*, is by baptism to take the name of Christ upon us, to be incorporated, ingrafted, and implanted into the church of Christ, being made visible members of his mystical body by baptism: *to be baptized into Christ's death*, imports our being conformed to him in the likeness of his death; our being engaged to die unto sin, as Christ died for sin. Learn by this, that the death of Christ was a lively representation of the death of sin; and believers are to imitate his death, in their dying daily to sin. The argument to move us to die unto sin, is drawn from our baptism; *we are buried with him by baptism into death*. The apostle alludes, no doubt, to the ancient manner and way of baptizing persons in those hot countries, which was by immersion, or putting them under water for a time, and then raising them up again out of the water; which rite had also a mystical signification, representing the burial of our old man sin in us, and our resurrection to newness of life. The metaphors of burying and rising again do imply and intimate thus much; burial implies a continuing under death; thus is mortification a continued act, a daily dying unto sin; rising again supposes a person never more to be under the power of death.

"We are told, Acts ii. 41, 'Then they that gladly received his word, were baptized: and the same day there was added unto them three thousand souls.' We need not enquire, whether the apostles did it by dipping or sprinkling, both being lawful: but this may be said, it is hard to guess how such a quantity of water could be brought to the place as might serve for the decent dipping of three thousand persons in so short a time. And, upon supposition that the water

was not brought to them, but they went down to that, baptizing so many by dipping would have required a week, rather than a day, to dispatch it in.

“It is said, Acts viii. 12, ‘But when they believed, Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.’ Mark, 1. Believed, and then baptized: these were adult, or grown persons, not infants; and they were heathenish idolaters, strangers to the covenant, and therefore must believe the gospel, and profess their faith in Christ, and obedience to him, before their baptism. 2. The persons baptized were women, as well as men: women, under the gospel, are capable of the seal of the covenant, as well as men. Under the law they were; then they were circumcised in the men; now they are baptized for themselves; ‘they were baptized,’ &c.

“The Eunuch is instructed before baptized; it was not forced upon him by Philip against his will. It is conviction, not compulsion, that must induce assent; after he had been instructed, he desired baptism; his qualification was, *believing with the whole heart*; only that faith gives a right to baptism, and entitles to salvation. This Eunuch believed with his whole heart that Jesus Christ was the Son of God. This gave him at once a right to baptism, and a title to heaven. The manner of the administration, he went down into the water, and was baptized by Philip: in those hot countries it was usual to do so, and we do not oppose the lawfulness of dipping in some cases, but the necessity of dipping in all cases. In sacraments, it is not the quantity of the elements, but the significancy of them, that ought to be attended to: as in circumcision, it was not the quantity of the flesh cut off; so in baptism, a few drops of water poured upon me, doth signify and seal, and convey and confirm to me, a right and interest in all the benefits of my Saviour’s death and resurrection, as fully as if, with Jonah, I were plunged into the main ocean. Crispus and his household were brought to believe, and were baptized; after whose example many of the people in Corinth believed also.

“Saul, as soon as converted, takes upon him the badge of Christianity by baptism; listing himself thereby a soldier under Christ’s exalted banner, and entering himself a member of that church which heretofore he had made havoc of.

“In Romans ix. 6, 7, it is said, ‘they are not all Israel which are of Israel: neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children; but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called.’ Learn hence, that the promises of God to his children and people are firm and stable; they shall not be made void, but be accomplished and made good to those that have a title to them, and interest in them, and fulfil the conditions of them. “Not as though the word or promise of God has taken no effect: all are not Israel that are of Israel.” That as all were not true Israelites of old that did bear the name of Israelites; so all are not true Christians at this day who take upon them the name of Christ, and bear the name of Christians. Men are very prone to bear up themselves upon the piety of their ancestors, though strangers in practice to their piety; as the Jews boasted they were of the seed of Abraham, but did not the works of Abraham; whereas men are so far from being God’s children because they had godly parents, that Christ told the Jews, who came forth out of Abraham’s loins, that they were of their father the devil.*

“In Romans iv. 11—13, the apostle declares the reason why, and the end for which, Abraham was circumcised, seeing he was justified by faith in the promised Messiah long before circumcision. He tells us that Abraham received circumcision as a *sign and seal of the covenant* made with him, and to his seed, Gen. xvii., and as an obligation that the righteousness of faith was the true way for a sinner to become righteous; which righteousness Abraham had obtained whilst he was uncircumcised, that so he might be the father, in a spiritual sense, of all believers, both Jews and Gentiles, who imitated him in his faith, and in the holiness and obedience of his life. By the appointment of God he was circumcised. Sacraments must be of divine

* John viii. 44.

institution, not of human invention. The church can make no sacraments; her duty is, with care and caution, to *administer* them. The elements are cyphers; it is the institution makes them figures: Divine institution is as necessary to a sacrament, as the royal inscription is to current money. The nature of sacraments in general, and of circumcision in particular; they are signs and seals; *he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness by faith.* It was a prefigurative sign of baptism, which, in the Christian church, was to succeed in the room of circumcision. Circumcision was not a sign only, but a seal also; ‘a seal of the righteousness by faith.’ The character and description here given of true believers; they are such as walk in the steps of faithful Abraham. They have not only Abraham to their father, but they walk in the footsteps of their father’s faith. The great promise which God made to Abraham and his seed, that they should possess that rich and pleasant part of the world, the land of Canaan, under which also heaven itself was typically promised and comprehended, was not made on condition of their performing perfect obedience to the law, but they were to obtain it by faith; that is, by trusting to, and depending upon, the gracious promise of a faithful God. Here is the justification of faith without works, which is the apostle’s grand scope, design, and drift; it runs thus: If the promise made to the father of the faithful was accomplished, not by legal obedience, but by the righteousness of faith, then it follows, that all his children were justified by faith, as Abraham their father was. Therefore, justification is not to be expected by the works of the law, but by faith alone. ‘For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.’* All those who would be accepted with God, unto righteousness and life, must be such as do believe in Christ with the heart, and openly confess with the mouth, that he is the Son of God, and the Saviour of the world: *if thou confess and believe, thou shalt be saved*: for ‘by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.’† The

* Rom. x. 10.

† Acts xiii. 39.

apostle applies this to his auditory, and tells them, that by the meritorious satisfaction and prevailing intercession of this Jesus, remission of sins is to be obtained, and deliverance from the wrath of God, for which the law of Moses could not, with all its ceremonial washings and sacrifices, cleanse and free them.

“ ‘But then arose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, that it was needful to circumcise them (the Gentiles), and to command them to keep the law of Moses.’ That is, some Jews of the sect of the Pharisees converted to Christianity thought and taught that circumcision and keeping of the law of Moses was necessary to salvation, both to Jew and Gentile Christians. When you will observe, how early the sound doctrine of Christianity was corrupted by erring teachers. And in Acts xv. 10, the apostle asks them ‘Why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?’ Thus was the ceremonial law in itself both a yoke and burden; and the imposing of it upon the Gentiles is *called tempting of God*, that is, a dangerous provoking of him, because it never belonged to them, but to the Jews only, which yet were never able to bear it, or so to observe it as to be justified and saved by it. Learn by this, That it was never the intent or design of God, that his people should be justified by their obedience to the ceremonial law; but that, being pressed with the weight, and pinched with the uneasiness of the yoke, they should seek unto Christ for righteousness and life, who alone was the fulfiller of it.

“ ‘By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.’ It must therefore necessarily follow, that *by the works of the law can no flesh*, that is, no person, neither Jew or Gentile, be *justified before God*: all the efficacy which the law now has, being to discover sin, and to condemn for sinning; ‘by the law is the knowledge of sin,’ by the law we apprehend our malady, but by the gospel we understand our remedy. Therefore no son of Adam, since the breach of the law, can stand justified before God by his best obedience to the com-

mands of the law ; for that which condemns cannot justify : an after obedience to the law, can never atone for a former disobedience ; because the best obedience we can perform to the law is imperfect. Now, he that mixes but one sin with a thousand good works, can never be justified by his works. He that would be justified by his works, must not have one bad work among all his good works ; for that one will lay him under the curse and condemnatory sentence of the law, as it is written * ‘ Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.’

“ ‘ All our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea.’ *All our fathers were under the cloud*, that is, under the conduct and protection of the cloud ; *and all passed through the Red Sea*, as upon dry land, and as the cloud did guide and direct Israel, so did it cool and refresh them in the wilderness, preserving them from the heat of the sun ; it was a covering canopy over them, in a scorching desert. In respect of their enemies, it was darkness to the Egyptians, and consequently protected the Israelites from their enemies, that they could not assault or fall upon them. It had a bright side to the Israelites, and a dark side, to the Egyptians. The Israelites are here said to be *baptized* in the cloud and in the sea ; that is, the cloud which overshadowed them did sometimes bedew and sprinkle them : and the Red Sea, through which they passed, had its waters gathered into two heaps, one on the right hand, and the other on the left, betwixt which the Israelites passed, and in their passage seemed to be buried in the waters ; as persons in that age were put under the water when they were baptized ; and thus were Israel baptized in the cloud and in the sea : all this was a figure, to which our baptism answers : both the cloud and the sea had some resemblance to our being covered with water in baptism, by which we are confirmed in the faith of Christ, and obliged to profess and own him, to trust in, and depend upon him, to serve and obey

* Gal. iii. 10.

him, and this to the death. Behold how much of Christ and his gospel was shadowed and held forth to the Jews under the dispensation of the ceremonial law; they had Christ in their sacrifices, and we have all their sacrifices in Christ. The cloud, the sea, the manna, the rock, all typified Christ, and were resemblances and representations of him. Christ was as truly represented to the Jews as unto us; as truly, though not so clearly.

“ ‘The like figure whereunto, even baptism, doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.’ Observe, 1. The type and the antetype, the ark and baptism; their salvation from the deluge, by the ark, prefigureth our salvation from God’s wrath, by baptism. As all that were without the ark perished, and all within the ark were saved; so all that are engrafted into Christ by faith, whercof baptism is a seal, are saved, whilst the unbelieving and unbaptized part of the world perish. Baptism is such a mean of spiritual salvation now, as the ark was of Noah’s and his family’s temporal salvation then; ‘the like figure whereunto, baptism, now saveth us.’ 2. How our apostle expresses himself, and plainly declares what he means by that baptism which is saving; negatively, it is not the outward ceremony of sprinkling the face, or washing the body, with water, that is saving, or any ways pleasing to God, save only as it is an act, an exercise, of our obedience to his command and will: but positively, it is *the answer of a good conscience towards God*, that is, the faithful answer of a resolved soul in the covenant of baptism, who gives up himself to the obedience of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and renounces the world, the flesh, and the devil; this covenanting is the condition of salvation, and baptism but the sign. Learn hence, That outward baptism alone saved none, but the inward only: and the sign and singular effect of inward baptism is ‘the answer of a good conscience toward God.’ Yet we must not conclude, with the anabaptists, from this text, that baptism can be of no saving advantage to infants, because they cannot at

present make this answer of a good conscience : for in the same manner speaks St. Paul of circumcision, that the true circumcision before God is the inward circumcision of the heart and spirit, and not the outward circumcision of the flesh. But who dare argue from thence, that the Jewish infants, for want of the inward circumcision, must not be admitted to the outward? The argument is the very same : will you say that the answer of a good conscience is absolutely necessary, and expressly required, that baptism may be beneficial ; therefore they only are to be baptized that can make the answer? The same we may say, that the inward circumcision of the heart was required as the only acceptable circumcision in the sight of God ; therefore they only are to be circumcised, who have this inward circumcision of the heart. But as the one *was* the will of God, so was the other. True indeed the Jews did not admit proselytes to circumcision then, no more will we adult persons to baptism *now*, without the answer of a good conscience, or a solemn stipulation to be the Lord's for ever : but they admitted infants to circumcision without it ; in like manner the Christian church now admits the children of Christian parents to baptism, without such answer made by them, but for them only.

“ Our Saviour, intending to cure the pride and ambition in his disciples, first preaches unto them the doctrine of humility ; and to enforce his doctrine, he sets before them a *little child*, the poor emblem of humility, assuring them, that unless they be converted, and turn from this sin of pride and ambition, and become as a little child in lowliness of mind and contempt of worldly greatness, they cannot be saved.

“ In John iii. 3, Christ acquaints Nicodemus, and in him all persons, that there must be a change from nature to grace, before there can be a change from grace to glory ; and that nothing short of the regenerating change would bring him to heaven. Two things are observable in the question to Nicodemus, ‘ How can a man be born when he is old ? ’ 1. His ignorance and weakness in propound-

ing of such a question. So true is that of the apostle* 'The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God.' What a gross conception had this learned man of the notion of regeneration! How ignorant is nature of the workings of grace! Men of name and note, of great parts and profound learning, are very often much at a loss in spiritual matters. 2. In this question of his, there is discovered a great deal of plainness and simplicity: he did not come, as usually the pharisees did, with an ensnaring question in his mouth, but with a mind fairly disposed for information and conviction; with a pious desire to be instructed. Whatever ignorance we labour under, it is safest and best to discover it to our spiritual guide, that we may attain the mercy of a saving knowledge; but how many would rather carry their ignorance to hell with them, than discover it to their minister.

"In Luke xviii. 15—17, it is said, 'They brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them; but when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein.' You will observe here, a solemn action performed; children are brought to Christ to be blessed by him. Where note, 1. The persons brought—children, young children, sucking children, as the words import; 'they brought them in their arms,' not led them by the hands. 2. The person they are brought unto—Jesus Christ. But for what end? not to baptize them, but to bless them: the parents looking upon Christ as a prophet, a great and extraordinary prophet, persuade themselves that by his prayers, and laying his hands on their children, they should be preserved from bodily diseases, and from Satan's power, that he would confer upon them all needful blessings. Learn from this, 1, that infants are capable of benefit by Jesus Christ; 2, that it is the best office that parents can perform unto their children, to bring

* 1 Cor. ii. 14.

them unto Christ, that they may be made partakers of that benefit; 3, that if infants are capable of benefits by Christ, if capable of his blessing on earth, and presence in heaven; if they be subjects of his kingdom of grace, and heirs of his kingdom of glory; then may they be baptized; for they that are within the covenant* have a right to the privilege of the covenant, and to baptism, the seal of the covenant: and if Christ denies not infants the kingdom of heaven, which is the greater, what reason have his ministers to deny them the benefits of baptism, which is the less? 4, that Christ will have all his disciples and followers to resemble little children in such properties wherein they may be patterns to them, namely, in humility and innocence, in freedom from malice and revenge, in docility and teachableness, in cleaving to, and depending upon, their parents, and in contentedness with their condition. 'Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein.'

"Christ, at thirty years old, was baptized: that by this symbol he might enter himself into the society of Christians, as by circumcision he had done into the society of the Jews: that he might, by his own baptism, sanctify the ordinance of baptism unto his church. That thereby he might fulfil the righteousness of the ceremonial law, which required the washing of the priests with water, when they entered upon their office.† He cometh to John, the Lord seeking to his servant, Christ will be baptized of his messenger! his design hereby no doubt was, to put honour upon the ministry of John.

"In Matt. iii. 5, 6, we read, 'Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.' The confession of those converts was voluntary. It was public and open. It was a confession of sin committed before baptism, and not after they were baptized. Note, that confession of sin past, together with a profession of faith in, and obedience to, Christ for the time to come, are necessary requisites and qualifications in all persons of riper

* Acts ii. 39.

† Exod. xxix. 4.

years that are admitted to baptism. John admitted those persons to baptism, upon their confession of sin and promise of amendment; from whence we may learn, That such persons as have been very bad, upon a profession of their repentance and promising to become better, may be admitted to the holy sacrament, provided that we warn them, as the Baptist did these, not only to make profession of repentance, but to bring forth fruits worthy of repentance.

“The preaching of the doctrine of repentance is absolutely necessary, in order to the *preparing* of the hearts of sinners for the receiving Christ Jesus and his holy doctrine. Those who live and die in their sins, shall always lie in prison, ever satisfying, but never able fully to satisfy, their obligation.

“With what equity, as well as impartiality, this distribution of God’s indignation and wrath will be made: ‘upon every soul that doeth evil; but upon the Jew first, and then of the Gentile.’ The Jew first, that is, principally and especially; because the light and mercy which the Jews abused and sinned against was far greater than that bestowed upon the Gentiles. Learn hence, That the light under which men sin puts extraordinary aggravations upon their sins, answerable whereunto will be the degrees of their punishment. The Gentiles will be condemned for disobeying the light of nature, the law of God written on their hearts; but much greater wrath is reserved for the Jews, unto whom were committed the oracles of God: but the greatest of all is reserved for Christians, who obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; these shall be punished with ‘everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe.’* ”

“The saints are all *born of God: not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man.* The bragging Jews did much boast of their natural birth and descent from Abraham, as being his blood and offspring; therefore it is here asserted, that men become not the children of God by

* 2 Thess. i. 9, 10.

natural propagation, but by spiritual regeneration: 'they are not born of blood.' Grace runs not in the blood: piety is not hereditary. Religious parents propagate corruption, not regeneration. Were the conveyances of grace natural, good parents would not be so ill suited with children as sometimes they are. No person then whatsoever has the gracious privilege of adoption by the first birth. 'They are not born of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man;' that is, no man, by the utmost improvement of nature, can raise himself up to this privilege of adoption, and be the author and efficient cause of his own regeneration. Man, in all his capacities, is too weak to produce the work of regeneration in himself. They, says a learned writer, who, by the influence of the highest rational principles, live most exactly according to the rule of rational nature, that is, of unregenerate morality, are the persons here described. God alone is the prime efficient cause of regeneration: he works upon the understanding by illumination, and upon the will by sanctification: 'Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.'

"A believer's spiritual life is derived from Christ, who by his spirit communicates a quickening virtue to all his members; 'because he lives, they shall live also.' See how Christ binds up their life together with his own! As if he had said, 'Whilst there is vital sap in the root, you that are the branches in me shall not wither and die.'

"All worship ought to be *voluntary*, as voluntary is opposed to constrained; but it must not be voluntary, as voluntary is opposed to instituted or appointed; God doth no more approve of that worship we give him according to our will, than he doth approve of our neglect of that which is according to his own will. But man, vain man, likes any way of worshipping God which is of his own framing, much better than that which is of God's own appointing.

"Paul expostulates with those of the Colossians who were willing to subject themselves to the observation of the old Jewish rites and ceremonies; and argues thus, 'If you profess yourselves in your baptism to be spiritually dead with

Christ, and to be freed by his death from the Levitical ordinances, why are ye subject to those ordinances? all which observances were to perish necessarily with the very using: and whereas they were set off with a specious shew of wisdom, as if they were voluntary services and free-will offerings to God, he acknowledges, they had indeed a shew of wisdom, but nothing of spiritual piety and devotion in them. Such as do by baptism profess themselves to be ‘dead with Christ’ to the ceremonial law, may certainly conclude that the Jewish ceremonies have now no more power over them, or that they ought to yield themselves to the observation of them; ‘If ye be dead with Christ, why are ye subject to ordinances?’ Though God approveth and accepteth willing worship, yet not will-worship, what fair shew soever it may seem to have, either of wisdom, humility, or of mortification. Whatever is the product of our fancies, is a very fornication in religion, and an abomination in the sight of God, how pleasing soever it may be in the sight of men. And yet, men are most forward to that service of God which is of man’s finding out and setting up; man likes it better to worship a God of his own making, than to worship the God that made him: and likes any way of worshipping God which is of his own framing, more than that which is of God’s appointing. Ah! wretched heart of man, which, whilst it seems very zealous to worship and honour God, hath not zeal to do it in any other way than in that which reflects the highest dishonour upon him.

“In John v. 43, our Lord says, ‘I am come in my father’s name, and ye received me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.’ As much as to say, You are incredulous to none but me; every deceiver, every cheat, that has but wit or wickedness enough to tell you, The Lord hath sent him, is believed by you; but though I come in my Father’s name, shewing a commission signed and sealed by him, and doing those works which none but God can do, yet you receive me not. Oh, *unreasonable infidelity*!—

“The apostle Paul, in 1 Cor. vii. 12, 13, resolves the case that the husband and wife, according to the intent and end

of marriage, ought to cohabit and dwell together; and he assigns the reason for it, because the unbelieving or infidel wife is sanctified to the believing or Christian husband. How sanctified? Not in her nature, but in her use; so that they might lawfully cohabit and converse together; being by marriage made one flesh with him or her that is holy: 'and for your children,' says he; they are not seminally unclean, like the children of the heathen, but federally holy. How are they holy? Not with an inherent, internal, personal holiness; for the holiest man's child is born in sin, and by nature a child of wrath; but with an external, relative, and federal holiness: they are not common and unclean, like the children of infidels, but fit to be partakers of the privileges of the church, to be admitted into covenant with God, as belonging to his holy people; 'else were your children unclean, but now are they holy.' He does not say, Hence were your children bastards, but now are they legitimate, as the enemies of infant baptism, those *duri infantum patres* (those cruel and unfeeling parents) would make him speak; but else were they unclean, that is heathen children, not to be owned as an holy seed, and therefore not be admitted into covenant with God, as belonging to his holy people.—Although the word holy be used above five hundred times in the New Testament, yet it never once signifies legitimacy, but is always used for a state of separation to God: therefore to make it signify so here, is a bold practising upon Scripture, a racking and wresting of the Word of God, to maintain a private opinion, to make the text speak what they would have, and not what the apostle intends. But the argument for infant baptism from this text runs thus; If the holy seed among the Jews were therefore to be circumcised, and made federally holy, by receiving the sign of the covenant, and being admitted into the number of God's holy people, because they were seminally holy; for the root being holy, the branches were also holy; then, by like reason, the holy seed of Christians ought to be admitted to baptism, and receive the sign of the Christian covenant, the laver of regeneration, and so be entered into the society of the Christian church.

THIRD WITNESS.

I, the THIRD WITNESS, in compliance with the request, and in deference to the judgment, of the President, Secretary, and Members of the Salop District Committee of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, present myself before you, my Lord, and Gentlemen of the Jury, to give my testimony in such a manner as I may think best adapted to the Plaintiff's cause, *i. e.* for the good of the community at large.

“At the time that Almighty God first selected the Jews for his peculiar people, he instituted the rite of circumcision, whereby they were to be admitted into covenant with him. This institution was designed not only for an outward and visible mark, to distinguish those who professed their belief in the true God; but at the same time for a memorial, to remind them of his covenant; and for a monument, to incite them to perform their part of the covenant; and for a token that God would perform his part.

“This institution, which was designed for the Jews as the chosen people of God, was extended to those strangers also who became proselytes to the true faith. But in addition to this, another ceremony was appointed by the Jews themselves, derived, as they imagined, from the law of Moses, and certainly stamped with the sanction of high antiquity. Proud of their own peculiar sanctity as the elect people of God, and regarding all the rest of mankind as in a state of uncleanness, they would not admit converts into their church without washing, to denote their being cleansed from their natural impurity. Proselytes, thus purified and admitted into the Jewish church by baptism, were said to be regenerated, or born again: nor was this a mere empty appellation; but, being considered dead to their former relations, they

became entitled to rights and privileges from which by nature they were excluded.

“The duration of God’s covenant with the Jews being limited, the rite of circumcision was of course limited, and was to cease upon the completion of God’s promise in the sending of Christ. God had now accomplished his covenant with Abraham, by sending that seed of Abraham, in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed. And as there was no longer to be any distinction in favour of the Jews, the children of Abraham, above the other nations of the world, the outward mark of distinction was no longer useful. God was now to show no respect unto persons, to the circumcised or to the uncircumcised; but in every nation, among the Gentiles, as well as among the Jews, he that feared God, and worked righteousness, was equally to be accepted with Him.

“But upon the introduction of the new covenant in Christ, God was pleased to institute a new ceremony, whereby mankind at large were to be admitted into covenant with Him, as the Jews had been by the rite of circumcision. For this purpose Christ adopted baptism, which had been consecrated by his brethren after the flesh to a similar use, and ordained it, as the rite by which those who believed in him should be admitted to the privileges of his religion. ‘He kept the ceremony,’ says Bishop Taylor, ‘that they who were led only by outward things, might be the better called in, and easier enticed into the religion, when they entered by a ceremony, which their nation always used in the like cases; and therefore without change of the outward act, he put into it a new spirit, and gave it a new grace and a proper efficacy: he sublimed it to higher ends, and adorned it with stars of heaven; he made it to signify greater mysteries, to convey greater blessings, to consign the bigger promises, to cleanse deeper than the skin, and to carry proselytes farther than the gates of the institution. For so he was pleased to do in the other sacrament: he took the ceremony which he found ready in the custom of the Jews, where the Major-domo, after the paschal supper, gave bread and wine to every

person of his family ; he changed nothing of it without, but transferred the rite to greater mysteries, and put his own spirit to their sign, and it became a sacrament evangelical.'

"It was to this sacrament of baptism, the institution of which he was anticipating, that our Saviour alluded, when he declared to the Jewish Rabbi, who was enquiring into the nature of his doctrine, ' Verily, verily I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God ;' and when, in a reply to a further enquiry, he repeated his former declaration, and stated it in more limited and specific terms, ' Verily, verily I say unto thee, except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.' It should appear, I say, that he was here alluding by anticipation to the sacrament of baptism, which he intended to ordain ; and to that supernatural grace, which was thereby to be conferred through the instrumentality of water, and by the agency of the Holy Ghost ; adopting not only the ceremony itself, which he meant to exalt to more noble and spiritual purposes, but also the very term by which the Jews had described the change wrought in the baptized, although he undoubtedly employed it in a similar indeed, but in an infinitely more dignified sense. To the proselyte from heathenism to the Jewish faith, baptism had been a death to his natural incapacities, and a new birth to the civil privileges of a Jew : to him, who should be admitted to a profession of the Christian faith, and who should be born ' not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God,' it was to be a death unto sin, and a new birth unto those spiritual privileges, which should accompany his deliverance from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.* The Jewish proselyte had been baptized with water : the Christian was to be baptized not with water only, but with the Holy Ghost.

" ' Baptism (says the same pious and learned prelate) is a new birth, by which we enter into the new world, the new creation, the blessings and spiritualities of the kingdom ; and

* Rom. viii. 21.

this is the expression which our Saviour himself used to Nicodemus, Unless a man be born of water, and of the Spirit. And it is by St. Paul called the laver of regeneration. For now we begin to be reckoned in a new census or account. God is become our father, Christ our elder brother, the Spirit the earnest of our inheritance, the church our mother; our food is the body and blood of our Lord; faith is our learning; religion our employment; and our whole life is spiritual, and heaven the object of our hopes, and the mighty price of our high calling. And from this time forward we have a new principle put into us, the spirit of grace, which, besides our soul and body, is a principle of action, of one nature, and shall with them enter into the portion of our inheritance.'

"I make no scruple of considering these words of our Saviour, John iii. 5, as indicating the sacrament of baptism; because I believe it to be the doctrine of the Bible, and I am sure it is the doctrine of the Church of England, agreeably to which I conceive it is the opinion of the generality of the national clergy, that by that sacrament we are made Christians, and are born anew of water and of the Holy Spirit: or, that I may express myself in the words of the late apostolical Bishop Wilson, that 'Regeneration, or new birth, is that spiritual change which is wrought by the Holy Spirit upon any person in the use of baptism, whereby he is translated out of his natural state as a descendant of Adam, to a spiritual state in Christ, that is, to a state of salvation, in which, if it is not his own fault, he will be saved.' This doctrine, however, has been virtually at least, if not actually denied; and denied in terms which charge the maintainers of it with blindness and ignorance; with innovating on evangelical truth; with being opposers of the doctrines of the gospel, and patrons of a heathenish superstition.

"As it may be important to prove, beyond the possibility of a suspicion to the contrary, that the accusation which is to be made the subject of the present" trial, "implicates the Church of England, as well as the generality of her Ministers, I shall venture to show, by the adduction of several

passages in their Liturgy which it might be otherwise superfluous to specify, that the doctrine of regeneration by baptism is most clearly asserted by her, or, in other words, that she supposes, in strict conformity 'with the Scriptures,' not merely 'that all real Christians are regenerate by God's Holy Spirit,'—by which I understand all those who live a Christian life,—but that those also are so regenerated who receive baptism rightly, or, what in the case of infants at least in a Christian country amounts to the same thing, to whom baptism is rightly administered, notwithstanding by their future conduct they may forfeit the privileges of their new birth.

"The office with which I begin is the ministration of public baptism to infants, which the priest, having ascertained that the child has not been baptized, is directed to commence in this form; 'Dearly beloved, forasmuch as all men are conceived and born in sin, and that our Saviour Christ saith, None can enter into the kingdom of God, except he be regenerate and born anew of water and of the Holy Ghost; I beseech you to call upon God the Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ, that of his bounteous mercy he will grant unto this child that thing which by nature he cannot have, that he may be baptized with water and the Holy Ghost, and be received into Christ's Holy Church, and be made a lively member of the same.' I give the address at length, because it is placed at the very opening of the ministration of baptism, and is designed to draw the attention of the hearers to the purpose for which baptism is administered. The reason for their being called on so to pray is, 'forasmuch as Christ saith, None can enter into the kingdom of God, except he be regenerated, and born anew of water and of the Holy Ghost;' putting those passages together, what else is the prayer, that the child may be baptized with water and the Holy Ghost, than a prayer that by baptism he may be born anew.

"Proceeding to the prayers, I do not rest on that general expression in the first, but going forward to the second, I beg your attention to that passage, wherein the priest is directed to say, 'Almighty God, we call upon thee for this

infant, that he, coming to thy holy baptism, may receive remission of his sins by spiritual regeneration.' The passage needs no comment. Nor is it necessary to make any on the following extracts, while I point to that prayer, where we entreat Almighty God to 'give his Holy Spirit to the infant about to be baptized, that he may be born again;'—to the prayer of consecration, where we entreat him to 'sanctify the water to the mystical washing away of sin; and to grant that the child, now to be baptized therein, may receive the fulness of his grace, and ever remain in the number of his faithful and elect children;'—to the address immediately following the baptismal rite, wherein the priest calls on the congregation to give thanks to Almighty God expressly for this cause, 'seeing the child is regenerate;'—and to the thanksgiving that follows, wherein we are instructed to 'yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased thee to regenerate the infant with thy Holy Spirit, and to receive him for thine own child by adoption.' These words must be left to speak for themselves. They admit of no illustration or explanation. Language cannot be plainer.

"Let us proceed to the ministration of private baptism, where, the prayers being the same as in the public baptism, the same expressions occur as those already noticed. But when the child that has been privately baptized is admitted into the public congregation, the doctrine is repeated under several new forms of expression. The child being born in original sin, is said to 'be now by the laver of regeneration in baptism received into the number of the children of God;' a prayer is offered to Almighty God to 'give his Holy Spirit to the infant,' not, as in the former office, that he may be born again, but that he, 'being born again, may continue God's servant;' the congregation is required to give thanks to Almighty God for that the child 'is by baptism regenerate.' This great variety of expression, wherein the same doctrine is so repeatedly conveyed, proves to my mind, most satisfactorily, how tenacious the Church of England is of the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, and how anxious she is to impress it upon her members.

“This variety we have still further exemplified in the ministration of baptism to such as are of riper years; where, although the service is for the most part the same as that for the baptism of infants, certain particulars are added, not immaterial to be specified—thus, instead of the gospel from the 10th ch. of Mark, which is adapted to the condition of infants, but would be out of place in the baptism of adults, the passage selected is the conversation wherein Christ asserts to Nicodemus the necessity of the new birth; and which is made the foundation of the following exhortation. ‘Beloved, ye hear in this gospel the express words of our Saviour Christ, that except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. Whereby ye may perceive the great necessity of this sacrament, where it may be had.’ It must be enough barely to quote this passage: it would be an insult upon any man’s understanding to attempt to make it clearer; and it would be superfluous to add more from the same office. If a bare statement of this fact does not convince a man, nothing I am persuaded can ever convince him, that it is by baptism, in the judgment of the Church of England, that a man is born of water and of the Spirit.

“I am afraid of fatiguing and wearing out your patience by multiplying evidences of what must already be so clear. Knowing, however, as I do, and as every one at all acquainted with the state of religion in this country must know, that there are persons who, not content with denying the doctrine of baptismal regeneration themselves, would fain fasten their own private opinions upon the Church, and sedulously labour to propagate it as hers; I must solicit your attention whilst I proceed to show, by a still greater accumulation of proof, what her doctrine is; and that she does not confine her assertion of it to her baptismal offices, but disseminates it over other parts of her Liturgy.

“After being baptized, the first religious duty in which the Church requires a child to be engaged is the learning of his catechism: and here, reminding him of the privileges to which he was then admitted, the very first thing that she

this is the expression which our Saviour himself used to Nicodemus, Unless a man be born of water, and of the Spirit. And it is by St. Paul called the laver of regeneration. For now we begin to be reckoned in a new census or account. God is become our father, Christ our elder brother, the Spirit the earnest of our inheritance, the church our mother; our food is the body and blood of our Lord; faith is our learning; religion our employment; and our whole life is spiritual, and heaven the object of our hopes, and the mighty price of our high calling. And from this time forward we have a new principle put into us, the spirit of grace, which, besides our soul and body, is a principle of action, of one nature, and shall with them enter into the portion of our inheritance.'

"I make no scruple of considering these words of our Saviour, John iii. 5, as indicating the sacrament of baptism; because I believe it to be the doctrine of the Bible, and I am sure it is the doctrine of the Church of England, agreeably to which I conceive it is the opinion of the generality of the national clergy, that by that sacrament we are made Christians, and are born anew of water and of the Holy Spirit: or, that I may express myself in the words of the late apostolical Bishop Wilson, that 'Regeneration, or new birth, is that spiritual change which is wrought by the Holy Spirit upon any person in the use of baptism, whereby he is translated out of his natural state as a descendant of Adam, to a spiritual state in Christ, that is, to a state of salvation, in which, if it is not his own fault, he will be saved.' This doctrine, however, has been virtually at least, if not actually denied; and denied in terms which charge the maintainers of it with blindness and ignorance; with innovating on evangelical truth; with being opposers of the doctrines of the gospel, and patrons of a heathenish superstition.

"As it may be important to prove, beyond the possibility of a suspicion to the contrary, that the accusation which is to be made the subject of the present trial, "implicates the Church of England, as well as the generality of her Ministers, I shall venture to show, by the adduction of several

passages in their Liturgy which it might be otherwise superfluous to specify, that the doctrine of regeneration by baptism is most clearly asserted by her, or, in other words, that she supposes, in strict conformity 'with the Scriptures,' not merely 'that all real Christians are regenerate by God's Holy Spirit,'—by which I understand all those who live a Christian life,—but that those also are so regenerated who receive baptism rightly, or, what in the case of infants at least in a Christian country amounts to the same thing, to whom baptism is rightly administered, notwithstanding by their future conduct they may forfeit the privileges of their new birth.

"The office with which I begin is the ministration of public baptism to infants, which the priest, having ascertained that the child has not been baptized, is directed to commence in this form; 'Dearly beloved, forasmuch as all men are conceived and born in sin, and that our Saviour Christ saith, None can enter into the kingdom of God, except he be regenerate and born anew of water and of the Holy Ghost; I beseech you to call upon God the Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ, that of his bounteous mercy he will grant unto this child that thing which by nature he cannot have, that he may be baptized with water and the Holy Ghost, and be received into Christ's Holy Church, and be made a lively member of the same.' I give the address at length, because it is placed at the very opening of the ministration of baptism, and is designed to draw the attention of the hearers to the purpose for which baptism is administered. The reason for their being called on so to pray is, 'forasmuch as Christ saith, None can enter into the kingdom of God, except he be regenerated, and born anew of water and of the Holy Ghost;' putting those passages together, what else is the prayer, that the child may be baptized with water and the Holy Ghost, than a prayer that by baptism he may be born anew.

"Proceeding to the prayers, I do not rest on that general expression in the first, but going forward to the second, I beg your attention to that passage, wherein the priest is directed to say, 'Almighty God, we call upon thee for this

infant, that he, coming to thy holy baptism, may receive remission of his sins by spiritual regeneration.' The passage needs no comment. Nor is it necessary to make any on the following extracts, while I point to that prayer, where we entreat Almighty God to 'give his Holy Spirit to the infant about to be baptized, that he may be born again;'—to the prayer of consecration, where we entreat him to 'sanctify the water to the mystical washing away of sin; and to grant that the child, now to be baptized therein, may receive the fulness of his grace, and ever remain in the number of his faithful and elect children;'—to the address immediately following the baptismal rite, wherein the priest calls on the congregation to give thanks to Almighty God expressly for this cause, 'seeing the child is regenerate;'—and to the thanksgiving that follows, wherein we are instructed to 'yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased thee to regenerate the infant with thy Holy Spirit, and to receive him for thine own child by adoption.' These words must be left to speak for themselves. They admit of no illustration or explanation. Language cannot be plainer.

"Let us proceed to the ministration of private baptism, where, the prayers being the same as in the public baptism, the same expressions occur as those already noticed. But when the child that has been privately baptized is admitted into the public congregation, the doctrine is repeated under several new forms of expression. The child being born in original sin, is said to 'be now by the laver of regeneration in baptism received into the number of the children of God;' a prayer is offered to Almighty God to 'give his Holy Spirit to the infant,' not, as in the former office, that he may be born again, but that he, 'being born again, may continue God's servant;' the congregation is required to give thanks to Almighty God for that the child 'is by baptism regenerate.' This great variety of expression, wherein the same doctrine is so repeatedly conveyed, proves to my mind, most satisfactorily, how tenacious the Church of England is of the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, and how anxious she is to impress it upon her members.

“This variety we have still further exemplified in the ministration of baptism to such as are of riper years; where, although the service is for the most part the same as that for the baptism of infants, certain particulars are added, not immaterial to be specified—thus, instead of the gospel from the 10th ch. of Mark, which is adapted to the condition of infants, but would be out of place in the baptism of adults, the passage selected is the conversation wherein Christ asserts to Nicodemus the necessity of the new birth; and which is made the foundation of the following exhortation. ‘Beloved, ye hear in this gospel the express words of our Saviour Christ, that except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. Whereby ye may perceive the great necessity of this sacrament, where it may be had.’ It must be enough barely to quote this passage: it would be an insult upon any man’s understanding to attempt to make it clearer; and it would be superfluous to add more from the same office. If a bare statement of this fact does not convince a man, nothing I am persuaded can ever convince him, that it is by baptism, in the judgment of the Church of England, that a man is born of water and of the Spirit.

“I am afraid of fatiguing and wearing out your patience by multiplying evidences of what must already be so clear. Knowing, however, as I do, and as every one at all acquainted with the state of religion in this country must know, that there are persons who, not content with denying the doctrine of baptismal regeneration themselves, would fain fasten their own private opinions upon the Church, and sedulously labour to propagate it as hers; I must solicit your attention whilst I proceed to show, by a still greater accumulation of proof, what her doctrine is; and that she does not confine her assertion of it to her baptismal offices, but disseminates it over other parts of her Liturgy.

“After being baptized, the first religious duty in which the Church requires a child to be engaged is the learning of his catechism: and here, reminding him of the privileges to which he was then admitted, the very first thing that she

teaches him is, that, 'in his baptism he was made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven.' In his baptism he was made a child of God! Made a child of God; not formed so at his natural birth, but made so by a second, a new, a spiritual birth—made so at his baptism. As he proceeds, however, the doctrine is more fully and explicitly revealed to him. He is then instructed, that a sacrament is 'an outward visible sign of an inward spiritual grace given unto us;' and that it 'is ordained by Christ himself as a means whereby we receive the same' grace, 'and as a pledge to assure us thereof.' And being interrogated what is its inward and spiritual grace, he is instructed to answer, 'A death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness: for being by nature born in sin, and the children of wrath, we are hereby made the children of grace.' Had it been the intention of the composers of the catechism, as indeed I doubt not it was, to assert most unequivocally the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, how could it have been more directly asserted? Plainer language cannot be found. 'The outward sign of baptism is water; the spiritual grace, is a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness; for we are hereby made the children of grace.'

"The next religious office in which the child is engaged is the order of confirmation; wherein he ratifies and confirms the vows made for him by his sureties at baptism. We have here then, of course, an allusion to that holy institution; and, as if it were cautiously provided that the sacramental character of the institution should be kept steadily in view, we are reminded of the regeneration conveyed by it to the baptized. The bishop who presides at the office is thus directed to pray: 'Almighty and ever living God, who hast vouchsafed to regenerate these thy servants by water and the Holy Ghost, and hast given unto them forgiveness of all their sins; strengthen them, we beseech thee, O Lord, with the Holy Ghost, the Comforter.' The assertion is plain and direct: the church affirms, by the mouth of one of her governors, and she affirms it in the most solemn form of a prayer to the Almighty and ever-living

God, that he has vouchsafed to regenerate his servants, who come now to be confirmed, by water and the Holy Ghost: not, as hath been confidently alleged, ‘with a view to blessings contingent upon their future endeavours,’ but with a view to those which at baptism they actually receive.

“Hitherto we have seen frequent notice taken by the church of the doctrine of regeneration; and it is remarkable, that the parts of the Common Prayer Book which we have been hitherto examining, have either an immediate connexion with, or an obvious relation to baptism. And I think it no less remarkable, that there is (if I am not strangely mistaken) only one place more in the whole Book of Common Prayer, wherein the doctrine of regeneration, or the new birth, is noticed; and there it is noticed in perfect conformity with her expressions that have been already cited, as an event already passed, and one in which her members in general have partaken. In her collect for Christmas-day, the Church is led from the mention of the birth of Christ to mention the spiritual birth of those who are regenerated in him; who are made partakers of his nature, as he had condescended to become partaker of theirs. The collect runs in this form; ‘Almighty God, who hast given us thy only begotten Son to take our nature upon him, and as at this time to be born of a pure virgin; grant that we, being regenerate, and made thy children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by the Holy Spirit.’ The petition is exclusively for daily renovation: the notice of our regeneration, and of our adoption as the children of God, is retrospective, and is the grateful acknowledgment of a blessing once conferred, and not to be repeated.

“From the Liturgy, if we direct our attention to the Articles of our Church, we shall find a perfect harmony maintained about the doctrine in question. In three of the Articles it is incidentally alluded to, in such a manner as to shew that the Church takes for granted the connexion between baptism and the new birth. In the 9th, it is laid down that the original ‘infection of nature doth remain, yea in them that are regenerated:’ and by the context it appears,

that by the regenerated are intended, they that '*believe* and are baptized.' In the 15th, Christians universally are designated by the appellation of those 'who are baptized and born again in Christ;' and the 16th article speaks of the condition of 'those who fall into sin after baptism,' that is, according to an equivalent expression, after they have 'received the Holy Ghost.' But that which is more pointedly and more fully to our purpose is the 27th article, which expressly sets forth the doctrine of the church concerning baptism; 'Baptism is not only a sign of profession, and mark of difference, whereby Christian men are discerned from others that are not christened, but it is also a sign of regeneration or new birth, whereby, as by an instrument, they that receive baptism rightly are grafted into the church; the promises of forgiveness of sin, and of our adoption to be the sons of God by the Holy Ghost, are visibly signed and sealed; faith is confirmed, and grace increased by virtue of prayer unto God.' I give the whole of the description; the part of it essential to our present enquiry, exactly corresponding with the description in the catechism, which speaks of the outward visible sign, and the inward spiritual grace, is that baptism, or the washing with water, is a sign of regeneration or new birth; and that by it, as by an instrument, the promise of our adoption to be the sons of God by the Holy Ghost is visibly signed and sealed.

"Such is the doctrine of our Church with regard to regeneration; for, in conformity with this, she requires her ministers to instruct the people, that 'the baptism of their children ought not to be deferred longer than till the first or second Sunday after their birth;' 'lest (as one of her most highly esteemed Bishops hath observed) importune and unnecessary delay occasion that the child die before it is dedicated to the service of God and the religion of our Lord Jesus, before it be born again, admitted to the promise of the gospel, and reckoned in the account of the second Adam.' And she accordingly pronounces, what gives to the doctrine that I am maintaining its great practical importance, that, 'It is certain, by God's word, that

children which are baptized, dying before they commit actual sin, are undoubtedly saved.'

"Indeed, so unequivocal was the church in her opinion upon this point (baptismal regeneration) understood to be, that when, after the restoration of the royal family and the regal government in Charles the second, it was enacted that those ministers who had gained possession of any benefices during the rebellion should relinquish their preferment, unless they conformed to the principles and doctrines of the Church of England, the non-conformist ministers who quitted their stations assigned this reason, in common with others, for their non-conformity, that 'the church clearly teaches the doctrine of real baptismal regeneration.' It is therefore with some degree of pain and surprise, that I see any doubt of the inward and spiritual grace of baptism expressed by a living Minister of our Establishment, whose moderation and Christian charity appear not to be surpassed by his piety and zeal; and I esteem it no gratuitous concession, which is made by the less gentle advocate of a party in the church, that 'she speaks of every child that she has baptized as regenerate, as a partaker of the privileges of the gospel, and as in some sense called to a state of salvation.' But it is an uncharitable and a cruel insinuation, if he means to charge those whom he calls his opponents with concluding hence 'that our church knows of no distinction but that between professed christians and professed heathens, Jews, &c.; and that she really considers *all* who are her nominal members in such a sense in a state of salvation, as that they will escape future punishment and obtain everlasting happiness *whatever be their characters*.' God forbid that we should be justly exposed to so formidable an accusation! Let us rather trust, that whilst, with the Church, we maintain the regenerating efficacy of baptism to those who die before they commit actual sin, with her also we consider, in the language of the same author, that 'none who have arrived at maturity, and are capable subjects, are in such a sense Christians, as that they will obtain happiness and heaven, except those who are influenced by Christian

principles, and exhibit a Christian conduct : who are penitent believers, and habitual observers of God's laws.'

"I have dwelt longer upon this point, and have multiplied proofs to a greater extent than may appear necessary, to those who are contented to take the plain declarations of our Church in their plain and obvious meaning. To such persons it may be a matter of no small astonishment, that one of the founders of Methodism,* who uniformly gloried in his fidelity to the doctrines of the Church of England, declared that 'baptismal regeneration might, with all our best endeavours, be ineffectual;' affirming of himself, 'that though he had used all the means for twenty years, yet he was not a Christian;' and adopting the authoritative language of our Saviour, 'Verily, verily, I must be born again.' To such persons it must be matter of astonishment, that the other great leader of the schism, himself also a minister of the national Church, declared, that 'he would as soon believe the doctrine of transubstantiation, as that all people who are baptized are born again;'+ and pronounced, that 'baptismal regeneration was the Diana of the present clergy and of the present age.' A groundless (I suppose) and a wicked superstition, for which, like the idolaters of Ephesus, or the advocates of unassisted, unenlightened reason, (for their conceits he also denominates 'that great and boasted Diana,') we renounce the articles of the Christian faith, which at our baptism we promised to believe. Of persons such as these, regeneration is as it were inscribed on the banners, and is one of the watchwords, of their sect: regeneration, not the fruit of Christ's holy ordinance of baptism, but the effect of their declamation; not the blessing of a soul peacefully devoted to Christ's service, but the mark of one zealous in the cause of their party. They, who can be persuaded to embrace the tenets of that party, are described as labouring in the pangs and travails of the new birth, until Christ be formed in them; whilst all who tread in the sound paths of the church, of Scripture, and of antiquity, unseduced by their invitations, and unterrified by their threats,

* J. Wesley.

† Whitfield.

are represented, together with their ministers, those blind leaders of the blind, as unregenerate, unconverted sinners.

“I will not retort upon our accusers the charges which they lavish upon us. I will not even insist more strongly upon the discrepancy which prevails, between their tenets and those which the foregoing quotations will have satisfactorily shewn to be the tenets of our church. I will, in this place, do no more than express my hope and belief, that the remarks which I am now about to offer, and which shall be derived principally from Holy Scripture, will at least acquit us of the temerity of blindly subscribing to a doctrine without an appearance of sufficient evidence; even should they fail of proving, that the doctrine itself, unlike the image of the Ephesian Diana, did really ‘come down from heaven.’

“Now it is certain, that by being born again, of which our Saviour speaks in such lofty language, something is designed necessary to be attained by those who would enter into the kingdom of God. It is matter, therefore, not of mere idle speculation, but of the nearest and dearest interest, that we examine what is meant by being born again; in order that we may ‘be filled with all joy and peace in believing’ that we partake of it, if, as we apprehend, it is conferred by the sacrament of baptism; or, if not, that we may be enabled to discover what it is that is thus necessary for our salvation, and where, and when, and how it is to be obtained.

“In the first place, then, we derive a strong probability in behalf of our supposition from this consideration, That if the work of regeneration is not effected by baptism, it is almost impossible for any sober man to say when and by what means it is: and that we are thus left without any other guide, than the very questionable criterion of our own imaginations, or our own feelings, to determine whether we are in possession of that, which our Saviour has pronounced to be an indispensable requisite of salvation. A situation this of doubt, suspense, and anxiety, with regard to our eternal welfare, to which, it is reasonable to believe, that, with such a revelation of his will as Christianity professes

to be, 'the Father of mercies and God of all comfort' would not expose his humble creatures.

"For, that I may prosecute a former observation, if spiritual regeneration be not conferred by baptism, when (we may reasonably demand) and by what means is it conferred? In what other ceremony, and at what other season, shall we find that joint operation of water and of the Holy Spirit, of which Christ affirms we must be born? I say that joint operation; for surely those which Christ himself has joined together, it is not fit for man to put asunder.

"I am the more disposed to press this argument, and to bring it forward in the most prominent point of view, not only because it appears to me decisive on the question; but also, because the importance of the argument seems to be recognized by the silence of our opponents, who, in their zeal to enforce regeneration, the being born again, the being born of God, the being born of the Spirit, studiously keep out of sight the instrument, whereby Christ says we must be born again. 'But that we may be thus born of the Spirit (I use the words of Bishop Beveridge), we must be born also of water, which our Saviour here puts in the first place. Not as if there were any such virtue in water, whereby it could regenerate us; but because this is the rite or ordinance appointed by Christ, wherein he regenerates us by his Holy Spirit: our regeneration is wholly the act of the Spirit of Christ. But there must be something done on our parts in order to it; and something that is instituted and ordained by Christ himself, which in the Old Testament was circumcision, in the New, baptism, or washing with water; the easiest that could be invented, and the most proper to signify his cleansing and regenerating us by his Holy Spirit. And seeing this is instituted by Christ himself, as we cannot be born of water without the Spirit, so neither can we, in an ordinary way, be born of the Spirit without water, used or applied in obedience and conformity to his institution.'

"Upon this point, the observation of one of our first and most celebrated reformers is not unworthy of attention. 'Like as Christ was born in rags (says the venerable Lati-

mer), so the conversion of the whole world is by rags, by things which are most vile in this world. For what is so common as water? every foul ditch is full of it: yet we wash out the remission of our sins by baptism; for like as he was found in rags, so we must find him by baptism. There we begin: we are washed with water, and then the words are added; for we are baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and Holy Ghost, whereby the baptism receiveth its strength. Now this sacrament of baptism is a thing of great weight; for it ascertaineth and assureth us, that like as the water washeth the body and cleanseth it, so the blood of Christ our Saviour cleanseth and washeth it from all filth and uncleanness of sins: and so it is taught in King Edward's Catechism, that 'baptism doth represent, and set before our eyes, that we are, by the Spirit of Christ, new-born, and cleansed from sin; that we be members and parts of his Church, received into the communion of saints. For water signifieth the Spirit.'

"For the purpose therefore of regeneration, we conceive this union of water, as the instrument, with the Spirit, as the efficient principle, to be necessary, where it may be had; and although we acknowledge, with humble and grateful hearts, that the continued and unceasing influence of the Spirit is requisite for the welfare of our souls, and that we are daily renewed by his sanctifying power, sometimes perhaps without the instrumentality of outward means; still we are justified in contending, that for the express purpose of regeneration, not only is his operation necessary, but that it must also (humanly speaking) be administered through the mediation of water. It is not for man to dispense with the ordinances of God:

"Nay, for man to take upon him to dispense with God's ordinances, is not only generally an act of presumption, but it is also in a particular manner to derogate from the honour due to that Holy Spirit by whom we are sealed unto the day of redemption. 'For a special prerogative (saith Bishop Andrews) hath the Holy Ghost in our baptism, above the other two persons of the Trinity. That laver is his laver

properly, where we are not only to be baptized into him, as into the other two, but also even to be baptized with him, which is proper to him alone. For besides the water, we are there to be born anew of the Holy Ghost also, else there is no entering for us into the kingdom of God. So that to deny the regenerating effect of baptism is in some sense to do despite unto the Spirit of grace, and to rob him of his peculiar honour.'

"It is the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures, that we are by baptism made heirs of salvation through Christ; and it is the declaration of our Saviour, that we cannot enter into the kingdom of God, which is equivalent to the expression that we cannot become heirs of salvation, except we be born anew of water and of the Spirit. If then we cannot become heirs of salvation, except we be born of water and of the Spirit, and if we be made heirs of salvation by baptism, I see not how we are to evade the consequence, that the outward washing of baptism is attended by the sanctification of the Spirit, and that we are born of water and of the Spirit, when we are baptized. Thus when our Saviour, on giving his commission to the apostles to 'Go, teach all nations, baptizing them,' accompanied it with the promise, that he that believed and was baptized should be saved, it must clearly be understood that the communion of the Holy Spirit, and spiritual regeneration, were to attend on baptism, which is here expressly represented as the means of salvation.

"St. Paul, in his epistle to Titus, having remarked upon the depraved state of men before their conversion to Christianity, thus proceeds; 'But after the kindness and love of God our Saviour towards man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour: that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.*' By comparing together the several parts of this passage, it is evident that baptism is here repre-

* Titus iii. 4—7.

sented as the mean through which, or the instrument by which, the Holy Spirit of God regenerates us, and thereby makes us heirs of that eternal life, which the mercy of God our Saviour hath provided for those whom he justifies and saves.

“The same apostle, in his first epistle to the Corinthians, again representing as before the wretchedness of unbelievers, immediately adds, with reference to the christian converts whom he was addressing, ‘And such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.’ Where, as the Lord Jesus is mentioned as the meritorious cause of sanctification and justification, and the Spirit of our God as the efficient and operating cause; so also is the washing of baptism mentioned as the instrument by which those blessings are conveyed.

“The argument is more direct from what the same apostle says to the Colossians; ‘Buried with Christ in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him.’ What can be plainer or stronger to the point? Dead in their sins, and buried in baptism, by baptism also they were raised and quickened by God.

“To the Romans he employs the same figure, describing baptism as a burial, wherein they were dead unto sin and alive unto God: adding withal a particular, which confirms an opinion presently to be insisted on, that no other than baptismal regeneration is to be expected in this world. For, having observed, that ‘Christ being raised from the dead, death hath no more dominion over him: for in that he died, he died unto sin once, but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God;’ the apostle immediately subjoins, ‘likewise reckon ye also yourselves,’ likewise, in a like or the same manner, ‘to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.’* Does not the language of the apostle war-

* Rom. vi. 4—11.

rant the argument, that we are born anew in baptism, and in baptism exclusively?

“In the epistle to the Ephesians, again, he takes for the ground of an exhortation to conjugal affection, that ‘Christ loved the Church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word: that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.’* Sanctification and purity, unspotted and unblemished holiness, are here attributed to the Church of Christ, as the effect of the washing of water. But what water could produce such an effect without the operation of the Spirit? and what rite is performed by their joint operation but the sacrament of baptism? and by what appropriate scriptural term is the effect of their united influence to be denominated but by that of regeneration?

“Similar questions arise from the affirmation of the same apostle to the Corinthians; ‘by one spirit we are all baptized into one body.’† Allow the baptism here spoken of to be used in a literal sense, and its spiritual, and in course its regenerating, influence follows. Maintain that the use of the term is figurative, as the Quaker does, in this and other passages of the New Testament, and with him you may renounce the sacrament of baptism, which perhaps it were more consistent to do altogether, than to retain the ceremony, and to divest it, as far as can depend upon the denial, of that which gives it its value.

“The same inference is to be drawn from St. Peter’s first exhortation to the Jews after our Saviour’s ascension; ‘Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.’‡ The same inference follows from his language on his first preaching to the Gentiles, when, although the Holy Ghost immediately fell on them, so that they spake with tongues, and some might probably have thought it unnecessary to baptize such as had already

* Eph. v. 25—7.

† 1 Cor. xii. 13.

‡ Acts ii. 38.

received the Holy Ghost, yet (says Bishop Beveridge) ‘the apostle, considering that this gift of the Holy Ghost was only to enable them to speak with tongues, not to regenerate them, inferred from thence that they ought the rather to be baptized: “Can any man,” said he, “forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?” and he therefore commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord; which he would never have done, if it had not been necessary for them to be born of water and of the Spirit.’ And such is the inference from Ananias’s admonition to Paul, after his miraculous conversion: ‘And now, why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.’*

“It may be here not unimportant to remark, that as we argue for baptism being the vehicle of regeneration, because it is the vehicle of salvation to which regeneration is necessary; so also we may come to the same conclusion from this consideration, that all Christians, all persons who have been baptized, are indiscriminately said to have been regenerated. In the passages already cited from several epistles of St. Paul, it will have appeared that he applies the term to large societies of believers; especially to the churches at Rome and at Colosse. The language which he addresses to Titus upon that subject appears to be at least equally comprehensive; whilst St. Peter and St. John, each in a catholic epistle, addressed to immense societies of Christians scattered throughout the East, describe the persons whom they address as ‘Sons of God,’† ‘begotten, and born again.’‡ But wherefore, unless their regeneration was the effect of an ordinance, of which all Christians in general partake? and if so, of what ordinance but of baptism?

“From these several authorities I apprehend it to be established, as the general doctrine of the gospel, that the new birth, or regeneration, which is pronounced by our Saviour to be necessary to salvation, or (as he expresses it) to seeing or entering into the kingdom of God, is effected by the operation

* Acts xxii. 16.

† 1 John iii. 2.

‡ 1 Pet. i. 3. 23.

of the Holy Ghost at baptism. To this purpose, beautiful and satisfactory is the illustration of the learned Joseph Mede, where, speaking of St. Paul's text to Titus, as making baptism and regeneration type and countertype, he adds, 'The same was represented by that vision at our Saviour's baptism, of the Holy Ghost descending upon him as he came out of the water, in the similitude of a dove: for I suppose (he continues) that in that baptism of his the mystery of all our baptisms was visibly acted; and that God says to every one truly baptized, as he said to him, in a proportionable sense, "Thou art my Son, in whom I am well pleased."' Indeed, to deny the regenerating influence of baptism, is to deny its sacramental character; to strip it of that which makes it most valuable; and reduce it to a mere 'beggarly element,' a form without substance, a body without spirit, a sign without signification; it is, as one sound divine describes it, 'to make it no better than a piece of solemn pageantry;' or (to adopt the comparison of the same learned writer to whom I lately referred) it is 'to make of it an empty shell whose kernel is taken out; or a carcass whose soul is gone.' Of the folly of this conduct, and of the source from which it proceeds, one of our excellent reformers strongly expressed his opinion, when he said, that 'in all ages the devil hath stirred up some light heads to esteem the sacraments but lightly, as to be empty and bare signs:' and of the tendency of this conduct we have a memorable proof in the Calvinistic Founder of Methodism, who deprecated 'disputing about baptism, and other non-essentials, as the effect of a narrow spirit, or party, sectarian zeal.' Strip the sacrament of its spiritual character, and we see to what it is avowedly reduced.

"I am well aware, that no authority is admissible for the foundation of a doctrine, except that of the inspired writings. It is, however, sometimes of advantage to know, and it affords a strong collateral support to a doctrine if we can learn, how controverted expressions have been understood by those, who were most likely to be acquainted with their proper signification.

“It may be therefore useful to remark, and it will be a curious remark to those who bear in mind the assertion of our accusers about ‘baptismal regeneration being the Diana of the present age,’ that the opinions of the early Christians uniformly support the doctrine, which I have been deducing from the authority of scripture. ‘What Christ means by being born of water and of the Spirit,’ observed Bishop Beveridge, about a hundred and fifty years ago, ‘is now made a question: I say now; for it was never made so till of late years. For many ages together none ever doubted it, but the whole christian world took it for granted, that our Saviour by these words meant only, that except a man be baptized according to his institution, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God: this being the most plain and obvious sense of the words, forasmuch as there is no other way of being born again of water as well as of the Spirit, but only in the sacrament of baptism.’

“Austin says, that ‘from the infant newly born, even to the decrepit old man, as no one is to be prohibited from baptism, so there is no one who does not die unto sin in baptism: but infants die only to original sin, adults to all their sins, whatsoever they have added by their evil lives to that which they contracted at their births.’

“The following statement of the learned and judicious Hooker is more deserving of our attention; ‘As we are not naturally men without birth, so neither are we christian men, in the eye of the Church of God, but by new birth; nor, according to the manifest ordinary course of divine dispensation, new born, but by that baptism, which both declareth and maketh us christians. In which respect we justly hold it to be the door of our actual entrance into God’s House, the first apparent beginning of life; a seal perhaps to the grace of election before received, but to our sanctification here a step that hath not any before it.’

“The doctrine of conversion, as it is delivered by some of our modern sectaries, is so much at variance with the more sober, more rational, and, I trust, more evangelical doctrine of the national clergy; and it is so vehemently enforced as abso-

lutely necessary to salvation, and the preaching of it is represented as so indispensable a criterion of the preaching of the Gospel, that it requires to be carefully examined.

“ ‘Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.’ Such was our Saviour’s warning to the unbelieving Jews; and it was a warning highly necessary to be impressed, not upon them alone, but upon men of every description to whom the Gospel was originally preached. The Gospel militated against the prejudices, the pride, and the corrupt passions of all men: nor, unless they were subdued and superseded by humility, docility, modesty, simplicity, and that comparative innocence, which are the most distinguishing qualities of childhood, could it be effectually received. Among the Jews, he who obstinately resisted, and he who more actively persecuted, the faith of Christ; the Pharisee, who commended his own righteousness, and trusted to an exact performance of the ritual ordinances of the law; the Sadducee, who denied a resurrection; the Scribe, who was zealous for the Mosaic Institutions; even the disciple who was ambitious of sitting on the right hand or on the left of his master, in what he expected would be a temporal kingdom; and generally every child of Abraham, who was habitually and fondly attached to the national belief of the perpetuity of their exclusive privileges: among the Gentiles, those who were spoiled and seduced by philosophy and vain deceit; the sceptic who doubted, and the infidel who denied, the existence or the providence of a Supreme being; and the idolater, who worshiped the creature more than the Creator, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man: and universally, both among Jews and among Gentiles, those who were living under the dominion of sin, or were not duly convinced of the necessity of a Redeemer: every man, who was subject to prepossessions such as these, and they comprise almost every soul of man that breathed, must have been converted from his errors whether in principle or in practice; his heart must have been opened, and softened, and rendered capable of receiving

fresh and totally different impressions, before he could become a believer in the truth, or a performer of the duties, of the Gospel.

“Every man, who now also is under the influence of similar prepossessions, must now also undergo a similar change. Every unbeliever and every sinner, although made by baptism a member of Christ and a child of God, must be, in a certain sense, converted, if he would ultimately succeed to his inheritance of the kingdom of heaven. But to fancy that every Christian whatever must experience a conversion in order to be in a state of salvation; to assert, with the Arminian Founder of Methodism, that ‘he who knows no time when he had need of such a vast and mighty change as a change from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God, from death unto life, may by this also know, if he give himself leave to think, that he is not born of the Spirit, that he has never yet known God, but has mistaken the voice of nature for the voice of God:’—to suppose, with his Calvinistic competitor, that ‘in every Christian congregation there are two sorts of people, some that know Christ, and some that do not know him; some that are converted, and some that are strangers to conversion;’ and to assert that ‘every person must be converted or be damned, and that they who die in an unconverted state must be damned for ever:’—to contend, as is stated to be the opinion of our self-denominated evangelical brethren by their apologist, that ‘in order to a state of salvation, a change of mind, of views, and dispositions must be effected in *every person*, wherever born, however educated, or of whatever external conduct:’*—this is a conceit which revelation warrants not, and which reason and experience disclaim.

“That no man, however near he may approach to the perfection of the Christian character, and however lovely an example he may exhibit of the beauty of holiness, is absolutely perfect, and free from the dominion of sin, I readily admit. Every man has been undoubtedly guilty of ‘sins, negligences, and ignorances,’ for which he will be brought to

* Overton.

account, and will need the atoning blood of the Redeemer. But some humble Christians undoubtedly there are, who, having been once regenerated by water and the Holy Spirit, have so followed his heavenly motions, and improved his sanctifying graces ; have so pursued the calm and blameless tenor of their way ; have preserved that child-like simplicity of character, and that child-like innocence of conduct, that their angels may not blush to behold the face of their Heavenly Father.

“And are we to be told that Christians such as these must experience an entire change of heart, a thorough conversion of their ways ? It is not to ascribe any merit to their righteousness ; it is no prejudice to the precious efficacy of the Redeemer’s blood, or to the all-sufficiency of the Holy Spirit, (God forbid !) to say that they need no conversion. By that blood they have been purified from the original corruption of their nature ; by that blood they have been cleansed of their actual sins ; by the Holy Spirit of God they have been regenerated ; his preventing grace hath conducted them ; his assisting grace hath co-operated with, and given effect to, their zealous endeavours to persevere in the course of piety and virtue ; his sanctifying influence renews and invigorates them day by day. Let God have all the glory of their continuance in their Christian career ; but let it not be judged necessary that they should undergo ‘ a change of mind, of views, and dispositions,’ when that change must be from holiness unto sin : let them not be subject to a conversion, which must be the very reverse of turning them from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God.

“It is a remark of a learned prelate,* to whose labours in the discharge of a weighty and important office many of us have been indebted for instruction in sound theology, that ‘ We are not told in Scripture, as we are now imperiously called upon, to divide our hearers, being believers in Christianity in common, into the classes of converted and unconverted. There is indeed a conversion from infidelity ; or a

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conversion from sin, or from any particular sin, or course of sinning. "He which converteth a sinner from the error of his way (so saith St. James most divinely, in a far other strain, and in the true spirit of Christianity), shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." But that among men baptized as Christians, taught from their infancy to believe the doctrines and practise the duties of Christianity, a special conversion also at some period of their life is necessary to stamp them true Christians, is an unheard of thing in the gospel, and is plainly a novel institution of man. Thus taken, it is a spurious substitute for the true hinge of Christianity, repentance; with which in Scripture we find it conjoined as one and the same: "Repent, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out."

"To represent conversion, then, as universally necessary to all Christians, because it was universally necessary to all men before they became Christians, or because it is necessary to all who, whether through unbelief or impiety, have become apostates, as it were, from the religion which they professed, is a distinguished and fundamental error in the Methodistical creed. And it is likely to redound very little either to the advancement or to the honour of genuine Christianity, thus to confound those who are estranged from the faith or obedience, which are the duty of its professors, with those who, having remembered their Creator, and devoutly submitted to be taught of him from their youth up, have conscientiously endeavoured both to believe and to live as it becometh the followers of Christ."

FOURTH WITNESS.

I, the FOURTH WITNESS in this important cause, am "A minister of the establishment; and as I" see "no sufficient reason to relinquish my station, I" am "satisfied that it" is "my duty to retain it.—With a heart full of pride and wickedness; my life polluted with many unrepented, unforsaken sins; without one cry for mercy, one prayer for direction or assistance, or for a blessing upon what I was about to do; after having concealed my real sentiments under the mask of general expressions; after having subscribed articles directly contrary to what I believed; and after having blasphemously declared, in the presence of God and of the congregation, in the most solemn manner, sealing it with the Lord's supper, that I judged myself to be 'inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take that office upon me,'—not knowing or believing that there was an Holy Ghost,—I was ordained a deacon. 'The Force of Truth' sufficiently explains the state of my heart and my conduct, as it must have appeared in the sight of God, in this most solemn concern of my ordination; and it suffices here to say that, considered in all respects, I deliberately judge this whole transaction to have been the most atrocious business of my life. But I did not, at the time, in any degree regard it in this light; nor did I, till long after, feel any remorse of conscience for my *prevaricating*, if not directly *lying*, subscriptions and declarations, and all the evil of my motives and actions in the whole concern."

But "I have" now "discovered the importance of that trust which is committed to me; what is the extent of that duty it requires; and how it ought to be performed: and I find it something inconceivably different from what one would suppose it to be, from the too general, and well-nigh universal, conduct of those to whom it is committed. I have

also discovered what true, unadulterated Christianity is, and find it not exactly what even our creeds and articles represent it. I have arrived, in point of conscience, at perhaps an unnecessary scrupulousness; insomuch that I cannot, either through hopes of gain and favour, or through fear of loss and censure, do a thing that my heart disapproves. If by subscription be meant an avowed assent to the truth of every proposition contained in what we subscribe, I can never subscribe these articles, without telling a most audacious lie in the face of God, in a solemn and important matter of religion, for the sake of sordid lucre. Such a lie would wound my conscience, and forfeit His favour, *in whose favour is life*: and riches would make me but a poor amends.—But should preferment be offered, I shall venture to ask, whether” what I have just said “be the right definition of subscription or not. If they mean any thing else, and will say so—I mean, that a man may subscribe without believing every part—I then could subscribe. It is true, subscription would be then a farce: but that is their business

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aside all controversial writings, and determined to seek satisfaction on this question, as I had on others, by searching the Scriptures and prayer. I was no less time than three quarters of a year engaged in this investigation, before I came to a conclusion: but I was then so fully satisfied that the infant children of believers, and of all who make a credible profession of faith, are the proper subjects of baptism, that I have never since been much troubled about it.

"This was my conclusion, especially from the identity of the covenant made with Abraham, and that still made with believers; and from circumcision being the sacrament of regeneration under the old dispensation, as baptism is under the new, and *the seal of the righteousness of faith*.—Abraham received this seal long after he believed; Isaac, when an infant; Ishmael, when thirteen years of age. The men of Abraham's household, and Esau, though uninterested in the promises concerning Canaan, yet, as a part of Abraham's family, and of the visible church, were circumcised by the command of God himself. The circumcision of infants was enjoined with denunciations of wrath against those who neglected it. The apostles were Israelites, accustomed to this system. Adult gentiles were admitted among the Jews by circumcision, and their male children were circumcised also. In Christ, there is *neither male nor female*.—Had only adults been designed to be the subjects of Christian baptism, some prohibition of admitting infants would have been requisite; and we should never have read, as we do, of *households* being baptized, without any limitation or exception of this kind being intimated. In short, unless it can be proved that circumcision was not the sign, or sacrament, of regeneration, even as baptism now is, I cannot see how the argument can be answered: and all the common objections against infant baptism, as administered to subjects incapable of the professions required and the benefits intended, bear with equal force against infant circumcision. The conclusion, thus drawn, rests not on this one ground alone: collateral proof was not, and is not overlooked; but my idea always was, that not the *privilege* of the infant, but the *duty* of the

parent, is the grand thing to be ascertained : and this clears away much extraneous matter from the argument.

“To the question of immersion, or sprinkling, or pouring, I never attached any great importance. Immersion is doubtless baptism ; and so is sprinkling or pouring, according to my unvaried judgment. If a few texts seem to allude to baptism by figures taken from immersion, how many speak of *the baptism of the Holy Spirit* under the idea of *pouring out upon us*. The investigation of this controversy brought a variety of other subjects under my consideration, of which I had not before at all thought. I met with many objections to the Established Church, which I was not competent to answer, except by reciprocal objections to many things in use among our opponents, which I thought at least equally unscriptural. In this unsettled state of mind I was induced—to preach irregularly.” “I felt no consciousness of blame in what I did ; nor perceived that, in order to consistency, it was needful for me to choose one ground or the other, and to act either as a clergyman of the Establishment, or as one that had receded from it.—Gradually, however, I became more sensible of the inconsistency and impropriety of attempting to unite things in themselves discordant, and more attached to the Established Church : I refused to preach irregularly—and determined no more to deviate from regularity.

“It is highly reasonable to believe the Bible to be a divine revelation, and—equally reasonable to take all our measures of truth and duty from it, and to bow our understandings and inclinations to its teaching and governance. Many particulars, which philosophers, orators, and critics think inaccurate, may consist with this complete inspiration ; but every kind and degree of misrepresentation, as springing from personal, popular, or national prejudices or opinions, or as calculated to mislead the humble believer, or to sanction error, must be totally excluded. The things that are absolutely necessary to salvation are few, simple, and obvious to the meanest capacity, provided they be attended by an humble, teachable disposition. ‘He that believeth hath the

witness in himself.' The consequences of our present conduct, according to the Scriptures, are so immense, that if there were only a bare possibility that these were divine truth, it would be madness to run the risk of rejecting them, for the sake of gaining the whole world. What then shall we think of those who, having such unanswerable demonstrations of their being the word of God, that they cannot reasonably doubt of it for a moment, yet disobey the commands, and neglect the salvation, revealed in them, for the veriest trifle which can be proposed?

In them we read that "John was called the Baptist, or the Baptizer, because he admitted the Jews into the number of his disciples by the external rite of baptism, as a sign of profession and repentance; and when they were brought to confess their sins, and to profess repentance and a purpose of submitting to the Messiah who was at hand, and leading a new life, they were baptized by him *in*, or *at*, the river Jordan. The law of Moses prescribed 'divers washings' or baptisms, in which water was used in different ways; by degrees it became customary in the Jewish church to baptize those who were proselyted to their religion, both male and female, as well as to circumcise the males. But though baptism had before been in use, John was singular in baptizing all his disciples, notwithstanding they had before been Jews, and without distinction of private character; thus intimating that by nature and practice they were all polluted, and could not be admitted among the true people of God, except washed from their sin, in the fountain which the Messiah was about to open. Water was the outward sign; but whether the rite was administered by immersion or not, is incapable of decisive proof. The use of water is essential, because that is the universal purifier: the quantity, and mode of application, seem to be merely circumstances, varying as occasion may require. βαπτίζω, is derived from βάπτω, to dip or immerse, but is not synonymous with it, as the use of the word and its derivatives clearly shews. It is taken more largely for any kind of washing, rinsing, or cleansing, even where there is no dipping at all. Some

indeed contend zealously that *baptism* always signifies *immersion*; but the use of the word *baptize* and *baptism* in the New Testament cannot accord with this exclusive interpretation. On the other hand, some, arguing perhaps too much from modern habits, have been sufficiently decided for the opposite interpretation. But I, after many years consideration and study, having" already "given the outline of my own conclusions, would only add, that vastly too much eagerness and acrimony have been employed in disputes on the subject, and far too little attention to the instruction suggested by this ordinance. The various ways in which the prepositions *ἐν* and *ἐν*, which are employed on this subject, are rendered in English in our authorised version on other subjects, must convince every man who examines it, that no weight can be laid upon them in controversial discussions, though the sound of the words may influence the mere English reader.

"There are two words in our Lord's commission, which are translated *teach* and *teaching*, but they are of a different meaning. The former means that general instruction which was necessary to bring men to profess themselves the disciples of Christ; and the other relates to their more particular subsequent instruction in all the various parts of Christianity. As the words might have stood in the same order, if it had been a command to go and convert all the nations to Judaism, circumcising them in the name of the God of Israel, and teaching them to observe the law of Moses, no argument hence can be fairly adduced respecting the *subjects* of baptism. For in this case it would have been understood, that the adult males must be circumcised on a profession of the Jewish religion, and their infant offspring at the time appointed; and in like manner all adults, admitted into the Church from among the Jews and Gentiles, must be instructed into Christianity before they were baptized, though their infant offspring might be baptized also; and the case is exactly the same still.

"The apostles were authorized and commanded to propose the blessings of the gospel indiscriminately to all men, as

far as they had access to them. These things they were instructed to enforce, in the name and stead of Christ their Lord, by assuring all who 'believed and were baptized,' that they should 'be saved;' and by declaring the final and dreadful condemnation of all unbelievers, whatever their characters in other respects might be. Doubtless we must understand this solemn declaration, of that true faith which receives Christ in all his characters and offices, and for all the purposes of salvation, and which produces a proper effect upon the heart and life; and not of a mere assent, a dead faith, which cannot profit. Baptism is the outward sign of regeneration, and it is also that profession of faith in Christ, which is required of all who embrace Christianity. But if men truly believe in Christ, profess openly faith in him, and partake of his sanctifying Spirit, they will doubtless be saved, even should they have no opportunity of being baptized with water, or should they fall into any mistake about the external mode of administering that ordinance: and if men both believe and are baptized, it does not follow, from the order of the words in the text, that the *baptism* is invalid, because it was previous to *believing*. On the other hand, unbelievers must be condemned; for they remain under the sentence of the holy law which they have broken; and they are also guilty of neglecting the salvation of the gospel, and of despising all the divine perfections displayed in it, from pride of heart, self-will, enmity to God, and love of sin and the world. They who hence conclude that infants are not capable of baptism, must also hence conclude that they cannot be saved: faith being more expressly required to salvation than to baptism. In the second clause, baptism is omitted, because it is not simply the want of baptism, but the contemptuous neglect of it, that makes men guilty of damnation; otherwise, infants might be damned for the mistakes, or the profaneness, of their parents. The words, perhaps, may more correctly be rendered, 'He that shall believe and be baptized.'—We as much preach the gospel when we declare, in the name of God, that he who 'believeth not shall be damned;' as when we proclaim, that 'whosoever

believeth' in Jesus 'shall be saved.' However men may now despise, or dispute against, such solemn denunciations, or deride or revile those who insist on them, they will doubtless be fulfilled, in their most tremendous meaning, upon all who hear and reject the gospel.

"Peter exhorted the Jews to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, as professing their faith in him, the Messiah; yet there is no reason to doubt that they were baptized 'in,' or 'into the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,' according to the appointed form. As so great a number were baptized on this occasion, and as they were not by the river Jordan, 'where was much water,' or near to any other river, but in the midst of a populous city, crowded also with strangers, it is at least highly probable that they were not baptized by immersion.

"The discourse of Philip fully convinced the eunuch, through the concurrent teaching and illumination of the Holy Spirit, that Jesus was the promised Messiah, and he was enabled to understand the nature of his kingdom and salvation. Accordingly, he desired to be numbered among his disciples. Doubtless, Philip had shown him the nature of baptism, as the initiatory ordinance of Christianity; when therefore they came to water, he desired to be baptized—and, stedfastly professing his faith in Jesus as the 'Messiah, the Son of God,' he was baptized by Philip. Men will form their conjectures concerning the mode in which Philip baptized him, according to their different sentiments on that subject.

"Peter justly concluded that it would be unreasonable to refuse them (Cornelius and his household) the baptism of water: and when none of his companions could say any thing against it, he ordered them to be baptized by some of those who attended him.* 'These words contain a plain and convincing demonstration of the falsehood of the Quakers' doctrine, that water baptism is unnecessary to them, who have received the inward baptism of the Spirit; since the apostle here not only declares, that water baptism ought

* Acts x. 47.

therefore to be administered to these persons, because they had already been baptized with the Holy Ghost; but also commands them to be baptized upon that account.' Cornelius must himself be saved, not by his prayers, and alms, his piety, and equity, and charity, but by the words which Peter would speak to him, and by faith in those words; and thus also salvation would come to his family.

"Lydia was led to embrace the gospel, and was baptized with her household; the adult part of which, no doubt, were instructed in Christianity along with her. There is no proof that there were any children in her family, though it is probable there were; the Syriac version indeed renders it 'the children of her house,' but this only shows the sentiments of those who made that early translation; and the language here used seems not capable of being consistently used in the narrative of those who reject infant baptism.

"The friendly address of Paul and Silas to the jailor, connected with the extraordinary interposition of God in their favour, seems to have been made effectual by the Holy Spirit, at once to convince him that these were indeed 'the servants of the Most High God.' They exhorted him to 'believe on the Lord Jesus Christ;' and assured him that in doing this he would certainly be saved. This faith implied a belief of their testimony concerning Jesus as the promised Messiah, and a reliance on him for all things pertaining to salvation. They also included his household in this assurance; not that his faith could save them, but his example might lead them to believe in Christ also; and with him they would become a part of the visible church, and have the benefit of the means of grace for their salvation. They then instructed him and all his family more fully in the doctrine of the gospel: and the Lord so blessed the word, that he was immediately humbled, softened, and changed, from a lion, as it were, into a lamb; and then professing faith in Christ, he was baptized in his name: and at the same time all his household was baptized likewise. Now, therefore, he brought them into his house, and entertained them at his table—at the same time his trembling was turned

into joy. 'He rejoiced with all his house,'—'having believed in God.' The language concerning the baptism of believers and their households, so much accords with that concerning the circumcision of Abraham and his household, that, in connexion with other Scriptures, with the general and early use of infant baptism in the primitive Church, and with the consideration that we do not read in the New Testament of one single instance in which the children of Christian parents were baptized adult, it must be allowed strongly to countenance the sentiments and practice of Pædobaptists.—It seems also most probable, to me at least, that Paul and Silas, in their painful condition, and in the jailer's house, did not baptize him and his family by immersion.

"It is probable that the apostle Paul (while he remained in Corinth) continued to lodge and work with Aquila and Priscilla; though he no more preached in the synagogue, but used the house of a Gentile. This circumstance might tend to give the Jews, who desired it, an opportunity of still attending his preaching. Indeed several of them had already embraced the gospel; especially Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, with all his family: and many afterwards were converted, and received into the Church by baptism, both of the Jews and Gentiles.

"Stephanas seems to have been with the apostle at Ephesus, when he wrote 'the Epistle to the Corinthians;' but his household and family remained at Corinth. The several persons belonging to his family were qualified for usefulness, and ought to have possessed great influence in that church; as they were the oldest converts to Christianity in all Achaia; and as they had habitually devoted themselves to every service, by which they could minister to the good of their brethren.

"The apostle would not have the Christians at Corinth ignorant, how that all the fathers of the nation of Israel, came out of Egypt under the guidance and protection of the 'cloud,' which gave them light by night, and was an overshadowing canopy to them by day; being an emblem of the Lord's providential care and gracious guidance of his people:

and that the whole company was safely conducted through the Red Sea, in which the Egyptians were drowned. Thus they were initiated, as by baptism, into the true religion, under the instruction of Moses, the type of Christ; by the overshadowing cloud, and by the waters of the sea: and the whole nation, men, women, and children, were acknowledged as the visible church of God, in a manner which resembled that by which all professed Christians were admitted into the church at baptism.

“ ‘The like figure,’ or *the antetype* of Noah and his family’s preservation in the ark, and by the water, at that time saved Christians, even ‘baptism.’ Christ is the true ark. His Church is within the ark, and is therefore safe; but all without will be swept by the deluge of divine vengeance into destruction. Into this ark, men enter by faith; this faith Jews and Gentiles professed, when by baptism they were admitted into the Christian Church: and thus the baptismal water formed, as it were, the sign of their safety. Yet it was not ‘the washing away the filth of the flesh,’ or the mere outward administration of baptism, however *rightly done*; not the outward sign—which could effect this, unless it were also *rightly received*. It was therefore ‘the answer of a good conscience towards God’ which saved; viz. when a man, by regeneration of the Spirit, was able to profess repentance, faith, and purposes of a new life, uprightly, and as in the presence of God; and sincerely to answer such questions as were put to persons on those occasions. When Jews and Gentiles professed Christianity, they were thus received into the Church, exactly in the same manner as Gentiles had been into the Jewish church, by circumcision: but the argument, concerning the Baptism of Infants born of Christian parents, is not at all affected by it.

“The apostle, by his introductory question, ‘Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?’ most emphatically shews that all who had been baptized into the name and religion of Jesus, had received the sign and made the profession of communion with him, and conformity to him, in his death. This profession was

equivalent to 'being buried with Christ,' as dead with him. For as his burial was a manifestation that he was really dead, and an introduction to his immediate resurrection—so the baptism of a converted Jew, or Gentile, was a professed manifestation of his death to sin, and to all his carnal expectations, affections, and pursuits, from which he meant to be entirely excluded, as one buried is from the affairs of life; and it was a professed introduction to his walking 'in newness of life,' not only as to outward actions, but with respect to his inward principles. The spiritual meaning of the external sign is the same when baptism is administered to the infant offspring of believers; even as circumcision was the same when it was performed on Abraham, the aged believer, on Ishmael, who perhaps never believed, and on Isaac, long before he believed. Great stress has been laid upon the expression, 'buried with him by baptism into death;' as proving that baptism ought to be performed by *immersion*, to which the apostle is supposed to allude. But we are said also to be 'crucified with Christ,' and *circumcised* with him, without any allusion to the outward manner in which crucifixion and circumcision were performed: and as baptism is far more frequently mentioned with reference to the '*pouring out*' of the Holy Ghost; and as the apostle is evidently treating on the inward meaning, not the outward form, of that ordinance; no conclusive argument is deducible from the expression, shewing that immersion is *necessary* to baptism; or even, apart from other proof, that baptism was generally thus administered.

"—Instead of the outward sign of circumcision, Baptism had been substituted; which some suppose to be meant by 'the circumcision of Christ:' this represented that death and burial with him, from former confidences, and sinful and worldly pursuits, which true Christians experience, in order to be made conformable to him in his resurrection. The baptism of Jews and Gentiles when converted to Christianity implied their "death unto sin and new birth unto righteousness;" their entrance into the church and kingdom of Christ; the washing away of the guilt and pollution of their

sins; and their dedication to the service of God—in whose name, as the God of their salvation, they were baptized. The same inward change had been signified by circumcision, which was administered to adult proselytes, and then to their infant offspring: so that no argument can hence be adduced against the Baptism of Infants.

“Nicodemus, though seriously impressed, seems to have had no distinct view of religion, further than as it related to the outward conduct. Water was used among the Jews in ‘divers washings’ or ‘*baptisms*.’ John used it in his baptism, and Jesus appointed it in his initiatory sacrament. This was the emblem of that spiritual washing, without which no man can be admitted into the true Church, as a living member of the same. As baptism, in the ordinary course of things, is requisite to the outward profession of Christianity, so regeneration is invariably necessary to the possession of its privileges, and the performance of its duties. ‘If, under the word water, baptism be especially intended, as that which is the peculiar sacrament of our regeneration, the sentence must be taken, as Christ had respect to the general order of the Church. Neither yet did he simply bind the grace of God to baptism, as if it was absolutely, and without any exception, necessary; seeing he just after ascribes regeneration to the Spirit, without any mention of water.’ ‘Whatever ignorance of the precept, or mistake about the nature of it, renders not men incapable of baptism by the Holy Ghost, can never render them incapable of the salvation promised to the baptized—it cannot be purely the want, but the contempt of it, which must condemn us.’ If, however, baptism, and being born again, be terms of the same meaning; or if the one invariably accompanies the other, so that all who are rightly baptized are regenerate, and none else; then all who die unbaptized, even infants, as well as others, all over the earth, and in every age of the world, without exception, are shut out of heaven! A proposition far more dreadful than any held by the most unfeeling and presumptuous Supra-lapsarian Calvinists.

“The expression, ‘of such is the kingdom of heaven,’ seems to mean, that little children are admissible into the visible church, under the New Testament dispensation, as they had been under that of Moses. Christ did not indeed order these infants to be baptized; for Christian baptism was not then explicitly instituted as the initiatory ordinance, and circumcision was still in force. Yet the passage seems to give considerable sanction to that method of bringing children to Christ, that they may be admitted among the subjects of his visible kingdom: and we must think those disciples at present mistaken who object to it, sometimes with arguments which would have equally held good against infant circumcision, or against ‘bringing infants to Christ that he might touch them.’ Indeed the expression may also intimate that the kingdom of *heavenly glory* is greatly constituted of such who die in their infancy. Infants are as capable of regeneration as grown persons; and there is ground to conclude, that all those who have not lived to commit actual transgressions, though they share in the effects of the first Adam’s offence, will also share in the blessings of the second Adam’s gracious covenant, without their personal faith and obedience, but not without the regenerating influence of the Spirit of Christ.

“The language in this Gospel (Mark) is more emphatical than that in St. Matthew; and it must be obvious, that the exhortations and instructions, which might have been addressed both to the parents and the children, and by the parents to their children, as a subsequent improvement of the transaction, must have been in many respects similar to those which may be grounded on infant baptism, when duly improved. The passage, therefore, though not a direct proof, has surely a favourable aspect towards bringing our infant offspring to Christ, seeking his blessing on them, and devoting them to his service in this sacrament; provided it be done intelligently and uprightly. ‘He took them in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.’ What Christian parent does not beseech him thus ‘to embrace his children in the arms of his mercy, to lay his hands on them,

and bless them?' And is not this the language of parents in presenting their children for baptism, if rightly understood and attended to?

“ ‘The unbelieving husband or wife was sanctified’ to the believer, by the appointment and command of God; so that their marriage was holy and honourable. If this had not been so appointed, and if Christians had been commanded to put away their unbelieving partners, as the Jews did their idolatrous wives, the children of such marriages would have been counted relatively ‘unclean,’ and so excluded from baptism, even as those of the Jews in the above-mentioned case were from circumcision; but, on the contrary, they were accounted holy in the Christian churches, and thus admitted among them as a part of the visible kingdom of God. Something more must be meant by the believer ‘sanctifying’ the unbelieving party, than merely legalizing their marriage; for that would have been valid and lawful, if both had been unbelievers, and the children would not *really* be more ‘holy’ in respect of their nature, if one parent was a believer, than if both were unbelievers. But as the word ‘unclean’ is frequently used in a relative sense, denoting *unfit to be admitted unto God’s ordinances*, and ‘holy’ the contrary; as in this sense the male children of the Jews were ‘holy,’ and so the partakers of circumcision, while those of the Gentiles, and even such as had one idolatrous parent, were ‘unclean,’ and excluded from circumcision; I cannot but conclude, after long attention to the subject, that the baptism of the infant offspring of Christians is here evidently referred to, as at that time customary in the churches; and that the Corinthians knew that this was not objected to when only one parent was a Christian,—the root being holy, so are the branches also: then—the holy seed of Christians ought to be admitted to baptism, and receive the sign of the Christian covenant, ‘the laver of regeneration,’ and so be entered into the society of the Christian Church.

“ We all by nature had interest in Adam, and were condemned in or by his condemnation. (This certainly we

all suffered on account of Adam's sin, who thereby became mortal, and propagated a mortal progeny; though all other consequences were best attributed to each person's actual transgressions.) Even so, being by faith united unto him, as branches in the true vine, we all may spiritually have interest in Christ, and be justified in his justification, for his perfect obedience to eternal life.

"I cannot but feel and consider myself as a man that has been peculiarly prospered of God; and I desire to acknowledge this with humble and devout gratitude. Yes, *goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life*. Whatever my *feelings* may at any time be,—and my situation and infirmities, and perhaps also my turn of mind, expose me, at times, to considerable gloom and depression,—I have not all that enjoyment which I could earnestly desire.—My feelings are often very uneasy; but I am free from great and sharp sufferings.—I am apt to be impatient, unbelieving, and cowardly.—Perhaps, when warmed with the subject, I speak more strongly of my own personal confidence than my habitual feelings warrant; but my dejected feelings are often perfectly unaccountable, and the least matter makes me subject to them: but I trust all will end well.—I know not how it is; I repent and believe,—I think, I am *sure* I do,—but I do not obtain the clear sense of pardon. There seems a great gulph fixed, which I cannot pass.—I hope—I fear—I tremble—I pray.—In the midst of the conflict I generally express hope of final victory, but think I shall die under a cloud.—I have not *triumphant* assurance, but something which is more calm and satisfactory—hope—generally predominates, though—even one fear, *where infinity is at stake*, is sufficient to countervail all its consoling effects.—What is the world, and the glory of it? I would not change my hope, lean and meagre as it is, for all the kingdoms of the world!

I shall here remark, that it is said of me, that " 'In every thing but comfort, my state is even *sublimely Christian*;' that, 'My state is bright in every one's view but my own;' that 'To my own apprehension I in great measure *walk in darkness*.' ('I have myself,' says one, speaking of me,

‘scarcely witnessed a gleam of *joy*’); that ‘One of these occasions (receiving the sacrament) was succeeded with blessed relief and comfort to my mind; but that I said, The clouds return after the rain;’ that ‘occasionally the attempt to convey to my ear some sentence of God’s word has succeeded; and that it is so kindly and thankfully received as is very affecting. But’ that they ‘are obliged to keep, on these occasions, almost entirely to first principles, such as the coming of the sinner to the Saviour;’ that ‘It is perfectly true, also, that some clouds occasionally interposed, and veiled to my sinking eye, for the moment, the glories of the invisible world. It is true that’ one scene of my life ‘presented me as an individual walking rather in the twilight of enjoyment, where the sun and the shade were struggling together for victory, than in a region of unmixed happiness. But (it is asked) are not such thoughts and anxieties the natural accompaniments of every step of our pilgrimage? and if finally dispersed by the light of faith, and hope, and Christian joy, does not their presence supply even a stronger evidence to the by-stander of the safety of the individual, than their absence? Undisturbed serenity may be undisturbed delusion. A calm after anxiety is a victory after the battle—is the ‘palm,’ when the battle is won; and such (it is said) is my case..... That (I say to my wife) ‘We shall, I trust, meet in heaven. I have less doubt of you than of myself.’ That ‘It was delightful to sit by me; I was calm, though often gloomy.’ That ‘under all the circumstances of my case, to have expected that my mind should be kept uniformly cheerful, and filled with bright anticipations, would not only have been to expect little less than a miracle, but would have shown a defective acquaintance with the operations of the human mind, and with God’s dealings with his most established and matured servants.’ That ‘deep thinkers, and highly gifted persons, are seldom favoured with such joy and peace in believing as are experienced by common minds; that men must always pay the penalty annexed to pre-eminence above their fellows.’ That ‘consolation is one thing, faith another.’”

“Enthusiasts, pretenders to new revelations, bigoted sectaries, and imposing churchmen, on the one hand, with infidels and sceptics on the other, and all who, to maintain their unscriptural tenets, or to exclude those mysteries which they reject, would either expunge part of the sacred canon, or invalidate its divine authority, with all those who think or say that it is of no consequence what men believe, have abundant cause to tremble at this solemn warning.* Critics, who are continually proposing conjectural alterations, or expunging from the text of Scripture, and adding to it, often on frivolous grounds, on slight authority, are in no small danger; and expositors in general have abundant cause to be cautious and humble. Indeed I am ready to tremble at the awful responsibility to which I have subjected myself when I write upon this testimony of Christ, and think of the work in which I have been during so many years engaged. But the merciful Saviour will no more condemn unintentional mistakes, in the honest *writer*, who desires to help men to understand his word, and proceeds in simple, humble dependence on his teaching, than he will the honest *preacher*; and I trust this effort to explain his Holy Scriptures, though feeble and defective, has been conducted from proper motives, and in dependence on the Lord. I can confidently appeal to my heart-searching Judge, that I have, as far as I know, written” and spoken “word for word, what I supposed he would have me write” and speak, “without adding, altering, or keeping back the sense of any passage, willingly, to save any personal end or party interest, from fear of incurring reproach or opposition, or desire of conciliating the favour of any man or set of men whatever; and that the mistakes which have been made were involuntary, the effects of ignorance and error, not of design.”

* See Rev. xxii. 18, 19.

THE FIFTH WITNESS.

"I," the FIFTH WITNESS, "have been an instructor of youth for forty-seven years, and a preacher of the gospel thirty-four. In studying the Scriptures, as a theological employment, I have found no small difficulty in permitting them to speak for themselves. I have found texts in them, in various instances, thwarting opinions which I had entertained, with little or no suspicion that they could be erroneous. Such opinions, by an authority which I durst not oppose, I have been compelled to give up. Whether I have adopted better in their place is yet to be determined. One consideration furnishes me with a satisfactory hope, that what I have taught is, substantially at least, the truth of God. It is this: the substance is the same with that which is found in almost every Protestant Creed and Confession of Faith; and with the scheme adopted in every age by that part of the Christian church, which has gained every where the appropriate name of Orthodox." (But it is said that "the views of my own attainments as a Christian are unaffectedly humble; that on this subject I am always reluctant to converse, conceiving—that mere professions are of little value: that rarely, if ever, have I been known to mention it; and that I never speak of myself as a Christian; that my humility in this respect is striking; that when speaking of the Christians present, I never include myself among them: that my declarations on this subject, in health and in sickness, always are that I do not *know* that I have any personal interest in the mediation of Christ: that I am usually free from distressing doubts and apprehensions, and that my hopes are often bright and supporting.")

"The Scriptures are a law, possessed of divine authority and obligation; they are the word of God, dictated by his

wisdom, goodness, and truth. They are the word of Him who cannot mistake, deceive, nor injure. Consequently they contain 'all things necessary for life and godliness,' whatever we need to know, and whatever we ought to do, for the attainment of his approbation. We are bound on the one hand not to question the truth, and on the other not to dispute the wisdom and goodness, of that which is revealed. *All things which this sacred book contains are to be received as they are.* Our own opinions are implicitly to bow before them, and we are ever to be ready to believe that what we think 'the foolishness of God to be wiser than men,' than all the substituted opinions of ourselves or others. 'Let God be true,' ought to be our invariable language, *but every man* who opposes his declarations *a liar*. The gospel contains *whatever it expresses*, and *whatever it implies*, but it contains nothing more. Nothing more, then, can be lawfully inculcated by any teacher as a part of the gospel.

"In examining the express declarations of Scripture, *we are bound to give them that sense which the words obviously convey, the current of the context demands, and the circumstances in which they were uttered point out.*

"Beyond this we cannot go, without *adding to the words of God*, and exposing ourselves *to be reproved by him, and found liars*. This sense we cannot change at all for one which we conceive will better suit, and support any part or the whole of a preconceived system, a doctrine of our own philosophy, or a tenet of the church, sect, or party to which we belong. *Thus saith the Lord*, is to every Christian a pole-star, an infallible guide over the ocean of doubt. To know that any thing is the will of God is enough. He obeys, and asks no reasons to prove his obedience wise and safe.

"A man, employed in supporting a darling point, will, when hardly pushed, very naturally feel, that, as he undoubtedly must be right in his own system, so the Scriptures must somewhere declare that which he, at the time, wishes to teach. With these views he will naturally hunt for the—passages which come nearest to the doctrine in question ;

and will as naturally believe that the meaning which he wishes to assign to them is their true meaning. Hence he will attribute to them the implication which he wishes to find. The whole of this process is wrong from the beginning. Every man, particularly every minister, is bound to take up the Bible with a desire and an intention not to find it supporting his own doctrines, but to learn merely what it actually declares, and to conform both his opinions and wishes to its declarations. In this way, he may humbly hope to discover the truth; in the other, he may be almost assured that he will be left in error.

“It is a hard thing for a man to believe the Scriptures, and not an easy one for a preacher. Generally, he may believe the great doctrines contained in them, and perhaps with no great difficulty. But when particular passages appear to thwart his own opinions, he will ever be in danger of bending them into a conformity to those opinions. His whole soul, on the contrary, ought to be yielded to the dictates of the Scriptures, and humbly to receive whatever God hath spoken. All persons who assemble to hear the gospel are here taught the manner in which they are bound to receive the truth. They are bound to receive it in its *purity and simplicity*, just as it was taught by Christ. They are bound to hear it with a reverential, ready, and obedient mind, as the law of life, and the only means of salvation.

“Our Saviour declares, ‘He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned;’ that is, he who cordially believes the gospel preached by the Apostles, shall have eternal life; and that he who does not thus believe the gospel, shall not have eternal life. It will be remembered, that the Apostles alone published the gospel to mankind. Of course, the only belief of which Christ can be supposed to speak in this passage, is the belief of the gospel which they have published.

“On the belief of this gospel, then, Christ has made the salvation of the whole human race absolutely to depend; that is, so far as it should be published to them. And every one who reads the gospel must know, that to be baptized in

the name of Christ, is to make a public and most solemn profession of faith in him as the Redeemer of mankind. *Evangelical faith and repentance are indispensable to the existence of any moral good in the soul of man, and are in all instances the beginning of that good, for no man ever obeys, in a scriptural sense, until after he has believed.*

“Regeneration is of the highest importance to man, as a subject of the Divine Government. With his former disposition, he was a rebel against God: with this, he becomes cheerfully an obedient subject. Of an enemy, he becomes a friend; of an apostate, he becomes a child.

“Regeneration is exclusively the work of the Spirit of God, as the following passages shew: ‘But to as many as received him gave he power to become the Sons of God; even to them that believe on his name. Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.’* In this passage of Scripture it is asserted, that the birth by which mankind become the Sons of God, is derived not from blood, or natural descent; nor from the will of the flesh; nor from the will of man; that is, not from human contrivance and determination in any form; but from God.

“The natural character is considered by the apostle Paul as differing from the regenerated, according to the full import of these two names; the *old man*, and the *new man*.

“The regenerated character is a new character. The assumption of this new character is equivalent to *being renewed*, or *created anew*; both of these expressions being used to denote it.

“The former character, or *old man*, is a corrupt character, conformed to deceitful lusts, or under the influence of such lusts. The *new man*, or *new character*, is *created after, or in, the image of God*.

“*This image consists in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness.* ‘For we are his workmanship; created in Christ Jesus unto good works.’† Here the Ephesian Christians are declared to be the *workmanship of God*, as to their

* John i. 12, 13.

† Eph. ii. 10.

Christian character ; and to be created in, or *through*, *Christ Jesus unto good works*.

“It is impossible that the reality, or greatness, or the importance of this change, should be expressed in stronger, or more definite terms.

“*Salvation is proffered by God, on his own terms only.* In the Scriptures are these terms found. From them alone can we learn on what conditions we may obtain life, and escape from death. *The way of holiness*, to which the gospel alone directs us, is there made *a highway ; and wayfaring men, though fools, need not err therein.*

“He who owes to another all his services for himself, can never become the means of atoning to him for the faults of another. In all cases of vicarious atonement, *the substitute* must be under no personal obligation to render the services, which are to be accepted as a satisfaction of *the principal*, or, in other words, the offender. Nothing is more plain, than that what is due for *himself*, cannot be transferred to the account of *another*.

“According to the scheme of the Scriptures, those who are children of Christ become such, by being given to him of the Father, by giving themselves to him, and then by being received by him. ‘Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.’* Thus it is evident that that which, on the part of mankind, makes them Christ’s children, *is their own voluntary gift of themselves to him.* Accordingly, St. Paul, speaking, in 2 Cor. viii. 5, of the Macedonian Christians, says, ‘that they first gave their own selves unto the Lord.’

“*The act, by which this voluntary surrender of ourselves to Christ is accomplished, is the faith, or confidence, of the gospel.* When Christ proposes himself to us as a Saviour, it is plain that we have no other security of the salvation, which he promises, besides the promise itself ; and this furnishes no security, beside what is contained in his character. Confidence, then, in his character, and in his promise as founded on it, is that act of the mind, by which alone it renders itself to Christ, and becomes his ; one of his chil-

* John vi. 37.

dren ; his disciple ; his follower. Unless the soul confide in him, it is plainly impossible that it should confide, or yield itself to him ; and unless it yield itself to him, it cannot become his. When the soul thus renders itself into the hands of Christ, *it does it on his own terms*. It casts off all former dependence on its own righteousness, whether apprehended or real, for acceptance with God, for forgiveness and justification.

“ Having now considered *the institution of the Church, and the members, of which it is formed*, I shall now give my evidence on the *Ordinance of Baptism (the first in order)*, as being that by which the members of the Church are, according to Christ's appointment, introduced into his body.

“ The proof on which this institution rests, as a perpetual ordinance of Christ in his church, is so entire, and so obvious, that every doubt concerning it is more properly an object of surprise, than of serious opposition. Christ directs his apostles, and all his succeeding ministers, to ‘ teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.’ In obedience to this command, the apostles accordingly baptized all those, who were made disciples by *them*. Those, who followed them in the ministry, followed them, also, in this practice. In this manner, the institution has been continued in the Church, with the exception of a few dissentients, to the present time. ‘ Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.’ *To be born of water*, is to be baptized. *To be born of the Spirit*, is to be regenerated. The indispensable condition of entering the visible kingdom, is here made by our Saviour baptism. The indispensable qualification for admission into the invisible kingdom, is regeneration—the great act of the Spirit of God, which constitutes men real saints. Baptism, therefore, is here made by Christ a condition, absolutely necessary to our authorised entrance into his visible Church.

“ Washing with water is the most natural and universal mode of cleansing from external impurities, and is, therefore, the most obvious and proper symbol of internal or spiritual

purification. Baptism denotes, generally, this purification ; and particularly is intended to present to us the *cleansing of the soul by the blood of Christ*, and still more particularly *by the effusion of the Divine Spirit*. To this interpretation of it, we are directed to the prophet Isaiah, in the 44th ch. ‘I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thy offspring.’ The same explanation is given of it also by God, in Ezek. xxxvi. 25—27, ‘Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes.’ As both these passages refer to the Evangelical Dispensation, there can be no reasonable doubt that the application here made to them is just, or that baptism especially signifies the effusion of the Spirit of God upon the soul.

“It is, however, to be very carefully remarked, that although baptism is a symbol of this affusion, and of the regeneration which is its consequence, *yet baptism neither ensures, nor proves regeneration*.

“Regeneration, in the Scriptures, denotes invariably *that change of character, or the cause of that change, by which sinners become holy*. Christ has taught us, that to be born again is to be born of the Spirit of God. ‘Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God:’ ‘Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.’ These two declarations, every person will see, are exactly parallel. *To be born again*, in the first of them, is precisely the same thing as to be born of water and of the Spirit in the last. *To be born of water*, as here intended, is, in my view, *to be baptized*; and is as absolutely necessary to our lawful admission into the *visible* kingdom of God, as *to be born of the Spirit is to our admission into his invisible kingdom*. That to be born of water, and of the Spirit, is the same thing with being born again, must be admitted by every one who is willing that our Saviour should speak good sense, since he obviously mentions, in this whole

discourse, but one birth, which he introduces to Nicodemus under the phraseology of being born again.

“I shall now proceed to consider the question, *Whether baptism ensures or proves regeneration.*

“The arguments in favour of the affirmative answer, are principally, if not wholly, derived from the following passages:

“First, Mark xvi. 16, ‘He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.’

“Here Christ declares, that he who believeth not, whether baptized or not, shall be damned. This could not be true if baptism and regeneration were thus connected.

“Secondly, *The same doctrine is argued from the passage quoted above*, ‘Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.’

“The account given of the subject in this text, is exactly the same with that contained in the preceding passage. To be baptized is to be born of water. To be a believer, is to be born of the Spirit. He who believeth, whether baptized or not, shall be saved; he that is born of the Spirit, whether born of water or not, shall enter into the invisible kingdom of God. In exact accordance with this construction of the passage, our Saviour, in every other part of his discourse with Nicodemus, insists only on being born of the Spirit, as the great qualification for acceptance with God.

“It is, however, to be observed here, that he who, understanding the nature and authority of this institution, refuses to be baptized, will never enter either the visible or invisible kingdom of God. As he refuses to become a member of the visible, he will certainly be shut out of the invisible kingdom. Considered with reference to a case of this nature, the passage (‘He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned,’) may be justly construed in the literal manner, for he who persists in this act of rebellion against the authority of Christ, will never belong to his kingdom.

“Thirdly, *This doctrine is also argued from Tit. iii. 5;*

‘According to his mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost.’

“Whether the words translated ‘the washing of regeneration,’ denote baptism, or not, according to the opinions of different commentators, is, in my view, immaterial to the present question. If baptism is denoted by these words, it is called the washing of regeneration, because it is symbolical of that change in the heart; and because Christ has established it as such a symbol, in his visible church. Beyond this, nothing can be pleaded from this passage in favour of the doctrine.

“There is yet another text, to wit, Eph. v. 26, of an import similar to that last quoted, which may be urged with somewhat less plausibility, as favouring the same scheme. It is this; ‘As Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.’

“These are the only texts, within my knowledge, which can be seriously alleged in favour of this doctrine; I shall now, therefore, proceed to show that this doctrine is erroneous by the following considerations:

“1. *It contradicts the general tenour of the Scriptures relative to this subject.*

“In the first place, *Adults are in the Scriptures required to believe antecedently to their baptism.*

“The apostles are directed to make disciples of all nations, and then to baptize them.

“That they understood their commission in this manner is unanswerably evident, from their own declarations. ‘*Repent, therefore,*’ said *St. Peter to the Jews*, ‘and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of the Lord Jesus.’ When the Eunuch said to *Philip*, ‘See, here is water; what does hinder me to be baptized?’ *Philip* replied, ‘If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.’ *Lydia* was baptized after ‘the Lord had opened her heart.’ *The Jailer* was baptized in consequence of his faith. *So was Paul*. So were *Cornelius and his household*. From these facts and declarations, it is evident, beyond controversy, that *adults*

were baptized by the apostles, after they had become, or were supposed to have become, disciples of Christ; or, in other words, after they were either really or apparently regenerated.

“2. The Scriptures teach us that the gospel, or the truth of God, is the great instrument of regeneration.

“‘The truth shall make you free,’ saith our Saviour.* ‘Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth.’† ‘Of his own will begat He us with the word of truth.’‡ ‘Being born again,’ says St. Peter, ‘not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God.’§ ‘The gospel,’ says St. Paul, ‘is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.’|| Again, ‘it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.’¶ Again, ‘in Christ Jesus have I begotten you through the gospel.’**

“3. The Scriptures expressly declare that baptism is not the great instrument of salvation.

“This is directly declared by St. Peter, in his 1st Epistle, iii. 21; ‘The like figure whereunto, even baptism, does now save us; not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God.’ In this passage he teaches, that the putting away the filth of the flesh is not, and that the answer of a good conscience is, the means of salvation. In other words, baptism is not, but the virtuous character, which is the effect of regeneration, is, the means of eternal life to mankind. This character, I have already shown, is so far from being the consequence of baptism, that every adult candidate for this ordinance is required to possess it, before he can be lawfully baptized according to the Scriptures.

“The Scriptures no where teach the doctrine, or duty, of confirmation, as necessary to the continuance of mankind in holiness; nor as an ordinance of the Christian Church in any sense.

“Multitudes of baptized persons give the most unquestionable evidence, from their baptism, or, if infants, from

* John viii. 32.

† John xvii. 17.

‡ James i. 18.

§ 1 Pet. i. 23.

|| Rom. i. 16.

¶ 1 Cor. i. 21.

** 1 Cor. iv. 15.

their first possession of moral agency, that they are sinners only.

“Immediately after their confirmation they continue to exhibit the same sinful character, and exhibit it through life.

“Thus, in every point of view, the doctrine that baptism is regeneration; that it ensures, or proves, that it is attended or followed by it, either regularly or commonly, is erroneous, unfounded, and unscriptural. So far is this from being the doctrine of the Scriptures, that, according to them, adults can never offer themselves for baptism unless already regenerated. *The answer of a good conscience* cannot be given by him who is not regenerated. And it is evident that no person who is unregenerated can declare with truth *that he renounces Satan, and believes in Christ.*

“The case of infants I shall notice more particularly hereafter. It will be sufficient to observe here, that although God has required believing parents to dedicate their children to Him in baptism, he has no where promised that they shall be regenerated either in, or by, the administration of this ordinance. Accordingly, a great multitude of the circumcised children of the *Israelites*, and of the baptized children of Christians, in every age and church, have plainly lived and died unregenerated.

“But although baptism neither ensures, nor proves, the regeneration of the person who receives the ordinance, it is still an institution of high importance to the Christian Church; and *that* in a great variety of respects. Particularly,

“It is a solemn, visible, exhibition of these two great scriptural doctrines, THE EXPIATION OF SIN, AND THE CLEANSING OF THE SOUL BY THE BLOOD OF CHRIST, AND ITS RENOVATION BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD.

“When these doctrines have been learned, and understood, by the reading or preaching of the gospel, so that the mind has become well acquainted with their nature and importance, it is prepared to discern the real import of this ordinance. In this situation, the ordinance of baptism becomes, in a high degree, subsidiary to the preaching of

the gospel. It now teaches the same inestimable truths which were before taught by the preacher; and teaches them with a force peculiar and pre-eminent.

“It is to be remembered, that as religious education is constituted in the Christian Church a primary mean of salvation, so the ordinance of baptism is invested with a peculiar importance, from the intimate and acknowledged connexion between the act of devoting a child to God in this manner, and the duty of educating him for the service of his Maker, and the attainment of eternal life.

“When children die in infancy, and are scripturally dedicated to God in baptism, there is much and very consoling reason furnished to believe that they are accepted beyond the grave.

“When little children were brought to our Saviour, He said, ‘Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.’ This seems to be a plain declaration that children are admitted to this kingdom, and constitute not a small part of the persons of whom it is composed. ‘*The promise,*’ said St. Peter to *the Jews,* ‘*is to you and to your children.*’ If this promise is extended, in any sense, to those who die in infancy, and conveys to them any blessings, they must be found beyond the grave.

“There is, *I think,* reason to hope well concerning other children dying in infancy. But there is certainly peculiar reason for Christian Parents to entertain strong consolation with respect to their offspring, whom God has not only permitted, but required, them to offer up to Him in this ordinance, pointing so extensively, and so significantly, to their purification.

“Children to whom this ordinance has been dispensed, are by these means doubly assured of the certain and inestimable benefits of religious education; and are entitled, in a peculiar manner, to the counsel, the reproof, the conversation, the example, and the prayers of Christians.

“Baptism is also the public sign by which the disciples of Christ are known to each other, and to the world.

“All societies need indispensably some mark of distinction ; some mode in which the respective members shall be known to each other ; so that each individual shall feel that he himself is required, and that he is invested with a plain right to require others, to perform the several duties incumbent on him and them, as members of the fraternity.

“A serious observer is, perhaps, hardly ever a witness of the administration of this ordinance, without strongly realizing the existence of that moral pollution which is symbolically washed away by baptism. The baptism of infants particularly, exhibits this subject in the strongest light. Here we see that our race, in the view of their Creator, indispensably need the cleansing, which is accomplished by the blood of Christ, and the renewing power of the Holy Ghost, antecedently to their possible commission of sin by voluntary acts. Their original corruption is, therefore, taught by this ordinance in language which cannot be misconstrued ; and is impressed upon us with singular force by its solemn and significant symbols.

“There is but too much reason to believe, that not only the persons, particularly the children, who have been baptized, but the parents also, are in many instances lamentably ignorant of the nature of this institution ; the truths which it declares, the duties which it involves, and the privileges which it confers.

“How many persons there are, who have been dedicated to God by baptism in their infancy, and who yet never thought of a single privilege, realized a single obligation, nor performed a single duty created by this ordinance ! It is perhaps questionable, whether some of them are not now ignorant whether they have been baptized or not. How melancholy are these facts ! How full are they of shame and sin ! How productive ought they to be of remorse, contrition, and amendment ! God has called young people into his visible kingdom in the morning of life. He has publicly sealed them as his children, and planted them in the nursery of his Church. He gave their parents the disposition and the right to offer them up, and to consecrate them to his

service. And by openly acknowledging them as his children, He has, if I may be allowed the expression, laid claim to them in a manner, which, while it demands of them the most intense gratitude, requires of them also to assume the character which He has thus externally conferred. I would request of all these to ponder this subject with deep and solemn concern, and to enquire, with all earnestness of mind, whether they are not in imminent danger of sharing the doom of *Capernaum, Chorazin, and Bethsaida*.

“In baptism, Christians appear as subjects of the ordinance but once in their lives; and most of them at this appearance being infants, are altogether passive.

“All those who believe in Christ, and publicly profess their faith in him, are proper subjects of baptism.

“Such a profession may be made with understanding; the person who makes it must be of sufficient age, and sufficient capacity, to know the great doctrines and duties of the gospel, and must already have become acquainted with them. He must also understand that it is the religion of the heart which is professed, and not merely a speculative belief of the truths and precepts contained in the Scriptures. Without such knowledge, no man can act, in this solemn case, with propriety, decency, or meaning. Nor do I know that the absolute necessity of such knowledge has ever been questioned. A public declaration of our cordial belief in the doctrines and precepts of the gospel is what is usually called a PROFESSION OF FAITH. The ground on which, indispensably, adults are admitted to baptism.

“The infant children of believers are also scriptural subjects of baptism.

“This doctrine has been extensively disputed and denied; so extensively, that those who have contended against it, have been formed into a distinct sect, existing in considerable numbers throughout most Christian countries. These persons, originally styled *Anabaptists* and *Antipædobaptists*, have claimed to themselves improperly the title of *Baptists*, indicating that they only baptized, or were baptized, in a manner agreeable to the scriptural directions on

this subject. While, therefore, I cheerfully acknowledge the distinguished piety and respectability of a considerable number of men in this class of Christians, particularly in *Great Britain*, I protest against their assumption of this name so far as it is intended to indicate that others do not baptize, and are not baptized, agreeably to the principles of the gospel. I acknowledge freely their right to their own principles. But their right to conclude, or to assert, that the point in debate between us and them is settled in their favour, I neither admit nor believe. The name *Anabaptist*, originally given to them because they re-baptized those who had received baptism in infancy, is an appellation in every view less objectionable.

“It is objected, that there is no certain example of Infant Baptism in the Scriptures.”

“To this I answer, that there is no instance in which it is declared in so many terms that infants were baptized. But there are instances in which, according to every rule of rational construction, this fact is plainly involved. Lydia and her house, and the household of Stephanas, were baptized. He who has examined the meaning of the words *house* and *household* in the Scriptures, cannot fail to perceive that in their primary meaning they denote *children*, and sometimes *more remote descendants*. Thus St. Paul said unto the jailer, ‘Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thine house.’ There is no reason to think that Paul knew what family the jailer had, and that he used the word *house* necessarily from this ignorance, in the manner in which it was customarily used by his countrymen. Of this manner we have many examples in the Old Testament. ‘Come thou and all thy house into the ark,’ said God to Noah.* We know that the house of Noah consisted of his wife and children.† In all these passages, and in others almost innumerable, the children only are meant. Thus the house of *Israel*, the house of *Judah*, the house of *Joseph*, are phrases exactly synonymous with the children of *Israel*, the children of *Judah*, and the children

* Gen. vii. 1. † See also Ruth iv. 12; 1 Kings xiv. 10—14; xvi. 3; xxi. 22.

of *Joseph*. In this manner, then, *Paul* unquestionably used the term in the passage already quoted; accordingly it is subjoined, ‘He was baptized, and all his, straightway.’

“*St. Paul* declares to the jailer, that, in consequence of his own faith, he and all his house should be saved. Should this, however, be contested, there is strong reason to believe that in some or other of these families, and not improbably in all, there were children too young to be baptized on their own profession of faith.

“*It is objected, also, that children cannot be the subjects of faith; and that faith is a necessary qualification for baptism.*

“This objection is certainly not founded in truth. *John the Baptist* was filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother’s womb, and was unquestionably a subject of faith in such a manner, that, had he died in infancy, he would certainly have been received to heaven. What was true of him can be true of any other infant. The objection, therefore, is founded on error.

“*It is objected, also, that infants cannot make a profession of faith; and that such a profession is a necessary qualification for baptism.*

“That infants are unable to make a profession of faith is obvious; but that such a profession is a necessary qualification for baptism in all instances cannot be proved. *Cornelius, and they who were with him*, made no such profession. No profession was demanded by *St. Peter*, nor were any questions asked concerning the subject. They, indeed, gave evidence, and God furnished evidence for them, that they were true disciples of Christ. ‘The Holy Ghost fell on them, and they spake with tongues, and magnified God.’ These facts, and not a profession of faith, are alleged by *St. Peter* as the reason why he baptized them.*

“*Peter’s* conduct was directed by the Holy Ghost, and is clearly expressive of the pleasure of God concerning this subject, and proves, beyond debate, that a profession is not always necessary, nor always required, as a qualification for baptism. The objection, therefore, is not founded on truth.

* Acts xi. 15—17.

“A profession is required as evidence of the faith and piety of the candidate. Whenever, therefore, such evidence is complete without it, the profession, so far as this end is concerned, is of no use. In ordinary cases a profession is *indispensable to an adult*, as a proof of his fitness for the reception of this sacrament; and at the present time is indispensable in all cases where adults are concerned, because, as I have before shewn, it is required in the Scriptures, and because it furnishes important evidence of their character as proper candidates for baptism. But, if God has exhibited a part of mankind as proper candidates for this ordinance by an institution of his own, and has not required a profession of them, the use of a profession, and the right of demanding it, so far as they are concerned, is taken away, their fitness for baptism being completely proved in another manner.

“It is, however, true, that infants are baptized in consequence of a profession of faith, but it is the profession of their parents, not their own.

“It is further objected, that persons baptized in infancy prove that they were improper candidates for this ordinance by the future degeneracy of their conduct.

“The real amount of this objection is, *that no persons can be proper subjects of baptism, to the human eye, who, after their reception of this sacrament, prove themselves to be unrenewed.*

“This objection fails, because it proves too much. It proves, not only that adults who are candidates for this ordinance are often improper subjects of it, but that the rules given in the Scriptures for our direction concerning this subject are insufficient and useless. All Scripture rules, therefore, concerning this subject, are, on this ground, destitute of any use to us, since we can never lawfully baptize. The apostles themselves certainly did not always know, for they baptized *Hymeneus, Philetus*, and *others*, who afterwards proved themselves to be sinners.

“Should it be granted, then, as it must be, that ministers act lawfully and scripturally, in baptizing some persons,

who afterwards plainly appear to be unregenerated, the objection fails, and is given up, since the objector concedes the very point for which he contends.

"The rules given by God alone rendered baptism lawful in any case. No qualifications in any person render him a proper candidate for baptism in any other sense than as they place him within these rules. Without these rules, regeneration would not render his baptism lawful. With them, we are to accord in every case, and are to ask no questions concerning any thing except what they require.

"It is objected further, that all baptized persons are, by that class of Christians to whom I have attached myself, considered as members of the Christian Church, yet those who are baptized in infancy, are not treated as if they possessed this character; particularly, they are not admitted to the sacramental supper, nor made objects of ecclesiastical discipline.

"This objection has, in my view, a more serious import than any other which has been alleged, and I acknowledge, without hesitation, that the conduct of those with whom I am in immediate communion, and, so far as I know them, their opinions also, with regard to this subject, are in a greater or less degree erroneous and indefensible.

"I am equally dissatisfied with my own former views and practice respecting this subject, and readily admit, that a part of what is contained in this objection is justly chargeable on many churches, and many ministers who hold the doctrine of Infant Baptism. But it lies only against the errors of men who adopt this doctrine, and not against the doctrine itself.

"That infants should be baptized, and then be left by ministers and churches in a situation undistinguishable from that of other children, appears to me irreconcilable with any scriptural views of the nature and importance of this sacrament.

"If baptized infants are members of the Christian Church (which I fully believe they are, if lawfully bap-

tized), *I think we are bound to determine, and declare the nature and extent of their membership, as it exists to our view.*

“There is not any thing in the ordinance of baptism which in any manner indicates that adults, when baptized, are members of the Church, and that baptized infants are not members.

“Having considered *the principal objections of the Antipædobaptists*, so far as I recollect them, I shall now offer some *direct arguments, to prove* that infants are proper subjects of baptism.

“*Infants were circumcised in the Church under the Abrahamic dispensation ; circumcision was the same ordinance with baptism ; therefore infants are to be baptized.*

“*The covenant made with Abraham was that which is made with the Church under the Christian dispensation.* To Abraham God said, ‘I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.’* ”

“In conformity to this covenant, God styled himself the God of *Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob* ; and afterwards the God of Israel, and the Holy One of Israel. *Moses* and the prophets, addressing the Israelites, call him perpetually *your* God ; and, when addressing the nation as one, thy God. But nothing is more evident than that God could not be the God of *Israel*, or of *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, in any sense in which he is not the God of all nations, and of all individuals, except by his own sovereign and gracious determination, expressed in his covenant.

“*Moses informs us that all Israel, not only the men, but their little ones also, their wives, and the stranger who was in their camp, from the hewer of wood to the drawer of water, were included in the covenant, made, or, in better terms, solemnly renewed, with God on that day.*

“*This covenant, also, was made between God and the suc-*

* Gen. xvii. 7.

ceeding generations of this people ; Neither with you only (that is with Israel then present,) do I make this covenant, but with him that standeth here with us this day, before the Lord our God : AND ALSO WITH HIM THAT IS NOT HERE WITH US THIS DAY.

“From these passages it is evident, as I apprehend, beyond all reasonable debate, that the covenant, made with *Abraham*, was made, first, *with himself*; secondly, *with his household generally*; thirdly, *with his servants by name*, whether born in his house or bought with his money; fourthly, with his *infant children*; afterwards, limited particularly to the *descendants of Isaac*, and afterwards, again, *to the descendants of Jacob*; fifthly, *to their descendants as a people*; sixthly, *to their little ones, or infants, in every generation*; seventhly, *to their servants universally*; and, eighthly, *to the strangers who dwelt in their nation*.

“To all these God covenanted that he would “be their God, and that they should be his people.”

“I say, this is evident beyond debate, because it is expressed in so many words, and those as unambiguous as are found in any language. He who attempts to reason away the plain import of such explicit declarations, may amuse and deceive himself, and those who listen to him; but he must be a very unhappy commentator on the word of God.

“This covenant being, then, the only covenant of grace which God has ever made with mankind; the terms, and therefore the extent of it, must ever continue the same, unless repealed, or otherwise altered, by its Author. But this covenant was as really, and as expressly, made with infants as with adults. If, then, God has not declared, in some manner or other, that he will no longer comprise infants within this covenant; it still comprises them. But he has made no such declaration in any manner whatever. Infants are, therefore, still comprised in this covenant.

“The fact, that infants were universally circumcised, during the continuance of the dispensation made to *Abraham*, will not be contested; I shall therefore shew *that circumcision was the same sacrament with baptism*.

“Circumcision was appointed to be a Token of the Covenant, before explained, between God and his Church. Ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskins, said God to Abraham; and it shall be a token of my covenant betwixt me and you.

“In a different form of expression, but ultimately with the same reference, and substantially with the same meaning, it is called a *seal of the righteousness of faith*. ‘And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had being yet uncircumcised.’ The intention of annexing a seal to a writing is, solemnly to make known that the writing is his writing, or the act, his act, whose seal it bears, and that it contains and communicates his pleasure.

“A covenant *between men* consists, universally, of two promises, or engagements; one made by each of the parties. The fulfilment of each of these promises is the condition, alternately, on which the performance of the other is engaged. Both promises are voluntarily made; and neither party, originally, was under any obligation to the promise actually made.

“These observations, however, are only in a partial sense applicable to a covenant *made between God and man*; particularly to the covenant now under discussion. *This covenant is a law published by God, directing, in an absolute manner, the conduct of men with respect to the subjects of the covenant; and annexing penalties to their transgressions and rewards to their obedience.*

“The Covenant, made with *Abraham*, is not only a Covenant of grace, but includes all other gracious covenants, which can be made with mankind: while it is also a law, absolutely obligatory upon all to whom it is proposed.

“In accordance with its character, as a covenant, *men are made parties to it*. In accordance with its character as a law, *they are required to become parties to it, and are punished for their refusal with the most distressing evils.*

“From these observations, it will be seen, that a seal, when annexed to this covenant by God, the Author of it, is a

solemn sign, and proof, that this is his covenant, and contains the terms, on which he has chosen to act towards those, to whom he has published it, whom he has involved in it, and whom he has required to become parties to it. It is His seal, annexed authoritatively by himself. It is a seal, also, *put upon mankind*. It is, therefore, to be placed upon all those whom he has included in the covenant; so far as he has directed them to be thus sealed. *Every one of these* is a proper subject of the seal. No question can be asked concerning the fitness of such persons to receive the seal; because that point is already decided by himself, in the direction which he has given to seal them.

“It has often been supposed that the seal of this covenant *was annexed to it by man*; to wit, *by every believer, when, acknowledging the obligation under which he was placed, he took the covenant upon himself in making a public profession of religion*. Formerly, this was my own opinion, but, upon examining the several things which are said in the Scriptures concerning both the covenant and the seal, I have become convinced that it was a groundless opinion. My former apprehensions were, as I believe those of others frequently have been, not a little influenced by the nature of covenants between men.

“But this covenant is proposed to us as a law; and our obligations to conform to its terms arise solely from the command of God; and are binding upon us absolutely, whether we consent to them or not. We are in no sense at liberty to consent, or not to consent: but our compliance is required by infinite authority. The seal of this covenant, therefore, is not set by us, but by God upon us; and that, whether we voluntarily comply with its terms or not; and is set upon such persons, as he has thought proper to direct.

“According to this exhibition of the subject, the Circumcision which is declared to be a ‘seal of the righteousness of faith,’ and the Token or proof of the covenant of grace, made with *Abraham*, was placed by the command of God upon him, and upon all the males of his household. Of these, some were infants, and some were servants. The

consent, either of *Abraham* or of his family, was not asked. The compliance of some of them, to wit, such as were infants, was impossible. That of many others in his household was probably never yielded, either knowingly, or voluntarily; yet upon all these was the seal placed by the divine command, under a penalty, for omitting it, no less than excision. In the same manner was it placed upon the whole nation of *Israel*, and upon all the strangers who were within their gates.

“To the existence of the opinion, which I rejected above, the fact, that *circumcision* is styled *a seal of the righteousness of faith*, has probably not a little contributed. The righteousness of faith denotes two things. One, is the *faith itself, which is counted for righteousness*; the other is the *righteousness*, in the proper sense, *which springs from faith*.

“In the former of these senses, I consider the phrase as used in the passage, so often alluded to. For it said, *that he received this seal, that he might be the father of all them that believe, whether circumcised or uncircumcised, that righteousness might be imputed, or counted, unto them also*: in other words, that *their faith might be counted to them for righteousness*, even as his own. If this explanation be admitted, Circumcision is here styled, *the seal of the faith of Abraham*, that is, *it was a seal, put upon Abraham, as a believer, by the appointment of God*. In the same manner was it put upon his infant offspring; upon his servants; upon all the people of *Israel*, being infants; upon all the strangers, who dwelt with them, and upon *their* infant offspring. In every one of these cases, it was a token, a proof, that the Covenant of God was upon them, as in the case of *Abraham* and his family. The covenant was the same; and the seal the same. The import of the seal was, therefore, the same to them all. But it is perfectly plain, that *Abraham's* family were not all Believers, in the Evangelical sense; nor, indeed, in any sense, at the time when this seal was affixed to them, for some of them were infants. It is equally plain, that the great body of his descendants were, also, not believers, when they were

circumcised; they, too, being almost all infants. The conclusion is, therefore, irresistible, *that circumcision was not, and could not be intended, to be a seal set by God upon the actual existing Evangelical faith of those who were circumcised*; because a part of those who were first circumcised by the immediate command of God, and almost all those who were circumcised afterwards, were, at the time of their circumcision, unpossessed, and incapable of this faith. Neither was it intended *to be a seal, set by the person circumcised, of his own faith: for, in most instances, he did not possess this faith; and in no instance set this seal.*

“Here, it will reasonably be asked, *What, then, is the import of circumcision?* I answer, It is what it was first declared to be. God said to Abraham, ‘Ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you.’ The covenant was a covenant of grace, in these terms; ‘I will be your God, and ye shall be my people.’ The conditions of it were, on the part of man, *that he should believe in God, especially in the Redeemer, with an evangelical faith*; and on the part of God, *that this faith should be counted to the believer for righteousness.* Of this covenant, circumcision was originally the seal.

“To mankind this covenant is, as I before remarked, a Law. All persons, to whom it is published, are required thus to believe. The Israelites, and the strangers who dwelt with them, were expressly placed under it; and expressly required to receive circumcision as *a token, seal, or proof*, that the covenant of God was placed upon them by his authority; as a proof, that *He was the God of Israel, and they his people*; as a proof also, *that they were required to believe in him, and that he would count their faith to them for righteousness.*

“This they were universally required to do, whenever they arrived at such an age as to be capable of doing it with the heart and understanding united. In this transaction, and not in circumcision, *man may*, in a remote and humble sense, be said to *set his own seal to the covenant of grace.*

“Secondly. *Circumcision was the initiatory seal of this covenant.* It was the public means of introducing the *Israelites* into covenant with God.

“Thirdly. *Circumcision was a symbol of the internal cleansing of the heart, by the affusion of the Spirit of God.* This is directly declared by St. Paul; ‘Circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.’

“Fourthly. *There were two Sacraments in the ancient church—circumcision and the passover. There are two sacraments in the Christian church—baptism and the Lord’s supper. It follows, therefore, that baptism is the same sacrament with circumcision.*

“This, independently of the preceding considerations, is, I acknowledge, a presumptive argument only. Connected with them, its force will not be easily avoided. But baptism was appointed, equally with circumcision, to be a token of the covenant between God and his church; a seal of the righteousness of faith.

“Hence, the conclusion appears to me unavoidable, that *as infants were circumcised under the former dispensation, they are to be baptized under the present.*

“Thus, it is evident, that the Church under the *Abrahamic* and Christian Dispensations is the same Church. All the ordinances and privileges, therefore, with which the Church was originally constituted, remain the same, unless annulled, or altered, by that Divine Authority, from which they were derived. But it was one original ordinance of this Church, that the infant children of professing believers were constituted members of it, and were accordingly to receive the initiatory seal of the covenant. This ordinance has neither been annulled, nor altered. The infant children of professing believers are, therefore, now constituted members of the visible church; and are now to receive the initiatory seal of the covenant.

“In Mark ix. 36, it is said, ‘And he took a child, and set him in the midst of them; and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them, Whosoever shall receive one of

such children in my name, receiveth me; and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but Him that sent me.'

"The meaning of the phrase, *to receive a child in the name of Christ*, is explained by himself in the 41st verse of the context. 'Whosoever shall give you a cup of water in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward. To receive such a child in the name of Christ, is to receive him, *because he belongs to Christ*. Infants, therefore, such at least as he spoke of, belong to Christ; and in this character are to be received by his followers. But they can be received, as belonging to Christ, in no other manner than that of receiving them into his church.

"In Matt. xix. 13—15; 'Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them and pray: and the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.'

"Here I observe, 1st. That *the parents who brought these children to Christ were believing Jews, who wished for his blessing on their offspring*. 2dly. *They were infants*, being called so by Luke, xviii. 15. 3dly. *The disciples rebuked the parents*. 4thly. *Christ reproved the disciples*. 5thly. *He declared that of such children the kingdom of God is composed*. 6thly. *He took them in his arms and blessed them*. The kingdom of God denotes either the Church on earth, or the Church in heaven. It is, however, in the highest degree probable, that the Church on earth is here intended; as, very plainly, children can come to Christ in the present world, so as to constitute a part of his kingdom, in no other manner, than by becoming members of the visible church.

"The interpretation which makes our Saviour say, 'Suffer little children to come unto me, because the kingdom of God is composed of Christians;' that is, of such as have a child-like spirit; sometimes alleged, is undeserving of a refutation.

"As there is no limitation of the promise made by Peter,

when he said, 'The promise is to you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call;' nor in any other part of the New Testament; it may, I think, be safely concluded that, if so great a change had been made in the conditions of the promise, St. Peter would, at this very time, have advertised these *Jews* of such a change. We may at least be certain, that he, or some other apostle, would have announced this change somewhere. But no such annunciation exists in the New Testament. The change, therefore, has not been made; and children hold exactly the same relation to the Church, at the present time, which they held under the *Abrahamic* dispensation. The only appointed way in which children may be offered to God, is baptism. The children of believing parents are, therefore, to be offered to God *in baptism*.

"According to Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Clemens Alexandrinus, Origen, Cyprian, Gregory Nazianzen, Saint Augustine, and Pelagius, infant baptism was uniformly practised by the early christians.

"The persons addressed by St. Peter, in the often quoted text, Acts ii. 38, 39, were a collection of Jews. Of course, they were persons, on whom God had placed his covenant, and to whom he had affixed the seal of circumcision. They were persons who had regularly partaken of the passover through life. They were not excommunicated persons. They were therefore still in the covenant. On this ground *St. Peter* declares to them, that the promise was still to them, and to their children.

"Still they were gross sinners, and had imbrued their hands in the blood of the Redeemer. They had not indeed been employed in the external act of putting him to death; this was done by the *Roman* soldiery. But they had sought and procured his death with a disposition probably more malignant and abominable than that of his real murderers. Thus they were gross sinners, and were therefore called upon *to repent*. They were also required to '*be baptized*,

every one of them, in the name of the Lord Jesus, for the remission of sins,' because baptism was now become the initiatory seal of the covenant. As the promise was to them and to their children, according to the gracious declaration of God to Abraham, it follows, that they, being baptized, and thus introduced into the covenant under the Christian dispensation, and made members of the Church under that dispensation, their children also were placed under the same covenant, and were to be baptized according to the appointment of God.

"I shall now attempt to show that Infant Baptism is in the Scriptures confined to the children of professing Christians.

"This doctrine I derive—From the constitution of the Abrahamic Church.

"All the *Israelites* were circumcised. All made a public profession of religion, or entered publicly into covenant with God. They all also partook regularly of the passover. Thus the children of every *Jew* were the children of a professor of religion, and as such received the initiatory seal of the covenant of grace.

"As the covenant under the Christian dispensation is, unless in some respect or other altered by the authority which first promulged it, exactly the same as it was under the Abrahamic dispensation, and cannot be lawfully either widened or narrowed by man, it follows that children are now to be considered in exactly the same light as under the former dispensation, unless the Scriptures have evidently changed the state of their relations and privileges. But, in these respects, no such alteration can be pleaded, for the Scriptures evidently contain none. The Church is not now confined to a single nation, nor are the individuals of any one nation, as such, made members of the Church. But the duty of professing the religion of the Scriptures, and the peculiar duties and privileges of those who have professed it, are now in substance exactly what they were under the dispensation made to *Abraham*.

“The parents who are represented in Matt. xix. 13, 14, as having brought their children to Christ that he might bless them, were professors of religion.

“As they were *Jews*, this will not be disputed. In addition to this, they were evangelical believers. They brought their children to Christ, *that he might bless them*, and therefore believed that he was able to give them an efficacious blessing. Of consequence, they believed he was the Messiah; if he was not, he was an impostor, and therefore utterly unable to communicate any blessing.

“There are some *who consider children as entitled to baptism in their own right, and without any reference to the relation which they bear to their parents*. These, I suppose, build their scheme on the fact, *that the Jewish children were universally circumcised*; on the direction given by Christ to ministers, ‘to teach all nations, baptising them,’ &c.; on the declarations of Christ concerning little children; and perhaps on some other foundation, of which I am ignorant.

“There are others *who require parents to make a profession of religion before they will permit their children to be baptized, but neither require nor expect them to partake of the Lord’s Supper*. In this manner, parents are taught that there is a distinction between the qualifications, which in view of the Scriptures are necessary to warrant us to offer up our children in baptism, and those which are necessary to make us, lawfully, communicants at the table of Christ, this distinction appears to me to be altogether unscriptural.

“The Scriptures have no where exhibited two such distinct sets of qualifications.

“*The tenor of the Christian covenant precludes every idea of such a distinction.* In this covenant *we avouch Jehovah to be our God, and ourselves to be his children*. This is a full profession of piety. That a profession of piety ought to be sincere, and to be made with the heart, will not be questioned. And if sincere, the professor has every possible right, and is under every possible obligation, to partake

of the supper. If, before he has made a profession, he doubts whether he shall make it with sincerity, he certainly cannot but know that 'he who doubteth is condemned,' and that 'whatsoever is not of faith is sin;' that is, as I understand St. Paul, we cannot do that which we do not find to be, with a fair, rational probability, warranted in the Scriptures. That he who enters into covenant with God, should *possess truth in the inward parts* cannot be doubted. 'For unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do, that thou shouldest declare my statutes, or that thou shouldst take my covenant into thy mouth?'

"Here the candidate himself declares he is not in his own view a Christian; of this he exhibits himself as being clearly satisfied, for he alleges it as a reason why he cannot come to the supper. But he thinks that, without being a Christian, he may offer up his children in baptism.

"This error is founded on the supposition, that there is one condition upon which men may lawfully dedicate their children to God in baptism; and another, upon which they may lawfully come to the Lord's supper. This is a distinction wholly unknown in the Scriptures. The only condition on which both these things may be done is, that we first offer up ourselves to God in the covenant of grace. Until this is done, we can lawfully celebrate neither of these sacraments. When it is done, we can with exactly the same lawfulness celebrate them both. In this transaction he is sincere, or he is not. In other words, he is a Christian, or he is not a Christian. If he is not, he cannot make this covenant with God in truth, and therefore cannot make it at all.

"Another error attending this scheme is, the supposition *that baptism is in its own nature a privilege*. Nothing is a privilege in the religious sense, but what God has made such; and he has made nothing such, except in his own way, and on his own terms. Baptism is a privilege when administered and received in the manner appointed by him, but in no other.

"*I shall now attempt to shew in what manner baptism is to be administered.*

"1st. *Those to whom the ordinance is to be administered are 'to be baptized into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.'*

"They are to be admitted into the visible family of God in the world; to have his covenant publicly established on them, by receiving this ordinance, its initiatory seal; to be openly enrolled among his children, and *to take his name upon them as a godly seed.*

2d. *They are to be baptized by a Minister of the Gospel.*

3d. Baptism is to be administered with water only.

4th. This water may be administered indifferently, either by *Sprinkling, Affusion, or Immersion.*

"On this subject the Christian world has, for a considerable length of time, been disturbed, by the clashing opinions and laborious contests of men, arranged on the two sides of the question concerning baptism. It is remarkable, that those who have adopted the doctrine of Infant Baptism, have very generally considered *sprinkling* or *affusion*, and that those who have opposed it, have considered *immersion*, respectively, as the proper modes of administration. Why this has happened, I am unable to explain. The latter of these classes have founded their opinion, professedly, on the proper meaning of the word βαπτίζω, and its root βαπτω; and on certain texts, in which, they think, they find proofs that the proper mode of baptizing was Immersion, or Plunging.

"Concerning the former of these subjects, I observe,

"1. *That the body of learned critics and lexicographers declare, that the original meaning of both words is, to tinge, stain, dye, or colour; and that, when it means immersion, it is only in a secondary and occasional sense, derived from the fact that such things as are dyed, stained, or coloured, are often immersed for this end.* This interpretation of the words, also, they support by such a series of quotations as seem unanswerably to evince that this was the original, classical meaning of these words.

"2. I have examined almost one hundred instances in which this word βαπτίζω, and its derivatives, are used in the

New Testament; and four in the Septuagint; these, so far as I have observed, being all the instances contained in both. By this examination, it is to my apprehension evident, that the following things are true:

“*That the primary meaning of these terms is cleansing; the effect, not the mode, of washing.*

“That these words, although capable of denoting any mode of washing, whether by Affusion, Sprinkling, or Immersion,—since cleansing was familiarly accomplished by the *Jews* in all these ways,—yet, in *many instances*, cannot, without obvious impropriety, be made to signify immersion; and in others cannot signify it at all.

“See what St. Paul says, 1 Cor. x. 1, 2. Happily for us, we have so particular an account of this transaction as to be able to determine, absolutely, what St. Paul intended by the baptism of the *Israelites* in this instance.

“See also Exod. xiii. 21, 22, and xiv. 19—22. In these passages we find, among others, the following facts declared.

“That the waters of the Red Sea were divided, so as to be a wall on the right hand, and on the left.

“That the Children of *Israel* went into the midst of the sea upon dry ground.

“In the whole of this story it is evident, there is no account whatever of that baptism of the *Israelites* mentioned by St. Paul in the passage quoted from 1 Cor. There is not even an allusion to this baptism, unless it is in the declaration that ‘the pillar of the cloud went from before the *Israelites*, and stood behind them.’ By the waters of the Red Sea they were not even sprinkled, much less immersed, but went, as Moses expressly informs us, between two walls of water, upon the dry ground. Neither is there here any account that *they were baptized in the cloud*, whatever this phraseology may mean.

“But what *Moses* has omitted, *Asaph* has particularly recorded, in the 77th Psalm. In this account of the passage through the Red Sea, we have *the baptism spoken of by St. Paul expressly mentioned. The clouds poured forth water* upon them, or descended upon them in rain, while

they were journeying through the sea. There is reason to believe, from this declaration, that when the cloud passed from the van of the Israelites to the rear, or when, in the language of the Psalmist, *they were poured forth* from before the *Israelites* to stand behind them, the rain may have descended from the cloud during the passage. Whether this be admitted or not, it is clear that this is the only account of the baptism mentioned by St. Paul, which is contained in the Old Testament; and it is equally clear that this baptism was a cleansing, accomplished by the sprinkling of rain, and certainly not by Immersion.

“Here, then, is one instance in which this word denotes cleansing by Sprinkling, and not by Immersion.

“Another example is found in Matt. iii. 11; ‘He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.’ The bare rendering of this passage, *He shall immerge you in the Holy Ghost, and in fire*, is, one would think, a sufficient exposition of the impropriety of translating βαπτίζω by the word *immerge*, or plunge. Substitute *cleanse* for *immerge*, and the impropriety vanishes.

“*It is incredible that the multitudes whom John baptized in the wilderness were immersed.*

“Of these a very great multitude were women. These multitudes certainly came to hear *John*, without having prepared any proper dress in which to be baptized; for they could not even know that he would baptize them. It will not be mistrusted that this promiscuous assembly were immersed naked. To have immersed them with their clothes on would have exposed them to certain disease and death.

“*It is impossible that those whom Peter and his companions baptized on the day of Pentecost should have been immersed.*

“All the difficulties which attended the baptism of *John’s* followers, attended that of these people also; and probably in a still higher degree; because they did not assemble to be baptized, nor even to hear the preaching of the apostles. They therefore certainly assembled in their usual dress. At the same time, it seems almost a thing of course, that the

apostles, who had just received a spiritual baptism, by the affusion of the Holy Ghost, and announced it to their hearers, should follow the mode in which this baptism was administered to them, in administering the baptism which was symbolical of it to their hearers.

“But, independently of these considerations, *the thing itself could not be done by the apostles, in the circumstances, and within the time specified, in the mode of immersion.* St. Luke informs us, that *they who received the word of Peter were then baptized, and that the same day there were added to them about three thousand souls.*’ The only way in which these persons could be known to be added to the church, or could in fact be added to the church, was by their baptism. They were, therefore, baptized that day. But the apostles could not, in any supposable circumstances furnished by the city of Jerusalem, nor indeed in any circumstances whatever, baptize by immersion three thousand persons within the utmost part of that day, which the story will allow us to consider as left for this purpose, after the other transactions mentioned in it were ended. The least consideration of the time necessary for each administration will clearly shew this impossibility. I conclude, therefore, without hesitation, that these persons were not immersed.

“*The fact that the affusion of the Holy Ghost is called baptism, is a direct proof that the affusion of water is, in the view of the Scriptures, baptism also.*

“The only question, with which we are here concerned, respects the mode merely. If, then, the communication of the Holy Ghost, whether for the purpose of enduing with supernatural gifts, or of sanctifying the soul, regularly expressed in the Scriptures by the verbs *ἐκχέω*, *ἐκχύω*, and *ἐκχύνω*, to pour out, be in the same Scriptures styled baptism; then the affusion of water in the ordinance, symbolical of this spiritual baptism, is, in the view of the Scriptures, baptism also.

“*Christ has expressly taught us, that immersion is unessential to the administration of this ordinance.*

"In John xiii., when Christ offered to wash the feet of *Peter*, he at first opposed it; but, afterwards consenting, requested, that not only his feet, but his hands and his head, might be washed also. Our Saviour replied, 'He that is washed need not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit.' The word, here rendered, *he that is washed* is 'ὁ λελουμένος, generally denoting *the washing of the whole body*, or bathing; and *by respectable critics* is supposed to have this meaning here. But I differ from them.

"The words of Christ are a reply to those of Peter, and intended to oppose the proposal made by him, that his master should wash his hands, and his head, as well as his feet.

"But the declaration, that the person bathed has no occasion to wash any part of his body, except his feet, contains no opposition to Peter's proposal; since Peter was not bathed, nor indeed any relation to it, so far as appears to me, except what is very distant and fanciful.

"The washing of the disciples feet, in my view, was a symbolical washing.

"Peter appears to me, plainly, to have understood it in the same manner; for, being now acquainted with the real design of Christ, he replied, 'Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head:' Christ rejoined, 'He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit.' A symbolical washing is perfect, although applied only to the feet; as perfect, as if it were applied to the hands and the head.

"To these observations may be added, the *unsuitableness of immersion, as an ordinance of public worship, to the circumstances of many nations in the world.*

"In a nation, whose manners are like ours (Americans of the U. S.), there is, to say the least, a degree of impropriety in this practice, which is very unhappy. This, it will be easily seen, is a subject on which I cannot here expatiate. It will be sufficient to say, that, whatever impressions may be made by this practice in countries where bathing is a standing custom, here they are of a very unfortunate

nature, and such as are directly opposed to every religious feeling. I speak from facts, and not from opinions; and from facts, repeated through a century, and therefore operating, not by their novelty, but by their nature.

“At the same time, the health, and the lives, of those who are baptized, are often injured, and destroyed. Here, also, I speak from facts. Both these considerations form, I acknowledge, only a presumptive argument in the present case; for God has an unquestionable right to require us to undergo this exposure, or any other according to his good pleasure. But the presumption is a very strong one, and to be admitted in its full force, unless the practice contended for is expressed with indubitable clearness.

“*On the texts alleged (by those, with whom I am contending,) as proofs of baptism by immersion,* I shall make but a few observations; particularly, because they appear to me to furnish very little support to the side of the question in behalf of which they are alleged. It is said of our Saviour, that after He was baptized ‘he went up straightway from the water,’ ανεβη απο του υδατος, he ascended from the water, and the word αναβαινω, signifying *to go*, or *come up*, to ascend, in whatever manner. This passage appears to be descriptive solely of Christ’s ascending the banks of *Jordan*, after he had received baptism. That this is not the meaning of the phrase cannot be shewn, nor rendered probable. The preposition απο is erroneously rendered *out of* in our translation. Its proper meaning, as every Greek scholar knows, is from, and can be *out of* only by accident: as in Matt. vii. 4; ‘Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye.’ Even here it would be much better rendered, *Let me take the mote from thine eye*. If *Matthien* intended to express Christ’s rising out of the water, he has certainly used phraseology of a very peculiar nature.

“Another passage often triumphantly alleged for the same purpose, is Acts viii. 38, 39; ‘And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the Eunuch; and he baptized him; and when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip.’ To the

translation here, no reasonable objection can be made. I will, therefore, not avail myself of what might, however, be justly alleged, to wit, that *eis* may with equal propriety signify *to*, and *ex* *from*. Still I object to the construction of those I am witnessing against, for these reasons :

“First. That we as naturally say, that they went into the water, of those who went in to the depth of the knees, or even of the ancles, as of those who have plunged themselves.

“Secondly. The declarations here made, are made concerning the *Eunuch* and *Philip* alike; of both it is said, that *they went down into the water*, if we render the word *eis* into; of both, also, it is said, *when they were come up out of the water*, if we render the word *ex* out of. Now let us see what will be the true import of the passage according to this mode of construing the words in question. *And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the Eunuch*—that is, *they were both plunged; and he baptized him*—that is, *Philip plunged the Eunuch*. And when they were come up out of the water, that is, when they had both been plunged the second time, and risen up from their immersion, *the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip*. In other words, both were plunged twice; and the Eunuch the third time.

“Thirdly. I conclude, as I think, with certainty, that these words have no reference to the immersion of either; but are barely descriptive of the fact, that they went down *to* or *into* the water; in which, perhaps, they waded a little distance.

“Another text of same nature is Rom. vi. 4, ‘Therefore we are buried with him by baptism unto death.’ The word *buried* is here supposed to denote *immersion*. In the next verse it is said, ‘for if we are planted together in the likeness of his death.’ *Our opponents* are bound to shew that this figurative expression, which refers to the same thing, does not as strictly signify the mode in which baptism is received as the word *buried*; and, if it does, to point out the particular mode of administering baptism denoted by the word *planted*.

“These are among the texts most frequently alleged by those with whom I am witnessing against. I do not suppose that they are regarded as being of any great importance to” the trial. “Their principal strength lies, as I conceive, *in their own view*, in what they suppose to be the original meaning of the words βαπτίζω and βαπτω; and these texts are pressed into the service as auxiliaries. If, then, their principal support fails, as, if I mistake not, I have shown that it does, these texts will be alleged without success. The general conclusion, therefore, appears to me to stand on solid ground; to wit, that baptism is in the Scriptures instituted as a symbol of the affusion of the Spirit of God upon the soul in regeneration, and the cleansing of its sins by the blood of Christ; and that the mode in which it is administered is not in the Scriptures exhibited as a subject of serious importance, and is no where declared to be immersion.”

SIXTH WITNESS.

I, the SIXTH WITNESS, shall “endeavour to adhere to the Latin maxim, familiarly rendered in English—‘Soft words and hard arguments.’ Whether I shall succeed or fail, the” court “must judge. To the blessing of the Lord I humbly commend” the evidence that I am about to give, “in the conviction,—a conviction that has gained strength by every new examination of the subject,—that the cause” of the plaintiffs “is his, and that its opponents, however plausible their scheme may be rendered, have not a foot-breadth of solid scriptural ground to stand upon.

“As a Pædobaptist, I am accustomed, along with my brethren of the same persuasion, to administer the ordinance of baptism, as occasions present themselves, both privately and publicly, to the infant children of believers, and we are countenanced in so doing by our churches and congregations.

“I am satisfied, that the argument respecting the validity of infant baptism is far from being so difficult and formidable, as, from the numberless pamphlets and volumes that have been written upon either side of the question, many are ready, without further enquiry, to suppose.”——And “there are too many, especially of the young, who, in the outset of their Christian profession, have not their minds directed at all to the subject. It is an unexamined point. And these persons, when, in this state of want of knowledge and information, they happen to fall in with a baptist friend, a baptist book, or a baptist argument, feel themselves unprepared to meet what is new and startling; their minds are in danger of being immediately unsettled, and of hastily adopting what is presented to them with no little plausibility, and possibly too with much imposing confidence.

“Nothing can be easier, on such a subject, especially now, when we have so much criticism about it made up by others and ready to our hand, than even for the veriest sciolist to make a mighty parade of learning. On no subject, it is granted, and especially on no subject that involves the obligation of conscience towards God, are we to allow ourselves to be determined by the weight of names and of human authority. ‘He that judgeth is the Lord;’ and ‘What saith the Lord?’ ought to be our sole enquiry.

“We state our argument thus. Before the coming of Christ, the covenant of grace had been revealed; and under that covenant there existed a divinely instituted connexion between children and their parents; the sign and seal of the blessings of the covenant was, by divine appointment, administered to children, and there can be produced no satisfactory evidence of this connexion having been done away. ‘And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, to be a God to thee and to thy seed after thee.’ As to this promise, which certainly sounds very like one of the ‘exceeding great and precious promises’ of the new covenant, it is of essential consequence first of all to notice, that in whatever sense God promises here to be a God to Abraham, he promises in the same sense to be a God to his seed. The promise is one. No hint is ever given of his being the God of Abraham in one sense, and the God of his seed in another. Now who are the seed to whom Jehovah thus engages to be a God? Surely to the seed specified in the terms of the covenant. And who are they? Have we not the answer given us by inspired authority, in the apostle’s interpretation of the words ‘Thou shalt be a father of many generations.’* ‘Therefore it is of faith, that it might be of grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed, not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all.’ If this means, as Paul teaches us, his being the spiritual Father of believers in all nations, then must not these be the seed of Abraham

* Rom. iv. 16, 17.

to whom he promises to be a God? If objections are brought to this, they ought I think to be brought against the apostle.

“Circumcision is most *expressly pronounced by the apostle* to have been a sign and seal of *spiritual blessings*, and especially of that first blessing of the gospel covenant, *justification by faith*. ‘Abraham,’ says he, ‘received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had being yet uncircumcised, that righteousness may be imputed to them also;’ the meaning of which words evidently is, not that the sign of circumcision was to Abraham the seal of his own personal justification, for this would be incompatible with subsequent *trial* and with his ‘giving diligence,’ like other believers, ‘to make his calling and election sure,’ inasmuch as it is impossible to arrive at a greater degree of certainty than that which is given by the sealed testimony of God; but rather that it was the seal of that covenant according to whose provisions all sinners, believing as he believed, were, like him, to be justified by faith. To this covenant, according to the apostle, circumcision was annexed.

“It was with this covenant then, which the apostle so explicitly declares to have been the covenant of grace ‘confirmed before of God in Christ,’ that the right of circumcision was connected. If the connexion between parents and children recognised in that ordinance had belonged only to the *old or Sinai covenant*, and if the ordinance of circumcision, instead of being of ‘the fathers,’ *had been exclusively of Moses*, pertaining solely to that temporary dispensation of which he was the mediator, we should then have seen a good reason why both the connexion itself, and the ordinances that marked it, should have ceased together, when the dispensation came to a close with which they were associated. But if circumcision was *not of Moses, but of the fathers*, if it originally pertained to a covenant that never ‘decayeth or waxeth old,’ and if under that covenant children were connected with their parents in the application of the sign and seal, then we must insist upon it that the burden of proof rests upon our opponents. To speak of the

abolition, tacit or express, of the old economy, the Mosaic dispensation, is nothing to the purpose, because the apostle assures us, that the covenant of circumcision, so far from being a part of the law, and partaking of its temporary and evanescent nature, was a covenant which existed long before it, which could not be disannulled either by its introduction or its cessation, but which continues to this day. By confounding this covenant with the law, and including any part of its gracious provision in 'that which decayed, and waxed old, and vanished away,' you set the law against the promises of God,' and throw into confusion and inconclusiveness the simple and beautiful reasoning of the apostle. That the particular *rite* is changed, we have abundant evidence; and satisfactory reasons for the change might be assigned, although it does not come within our province with certainty to assign them, nor can they be reasonably demanded of us.

"I am aware, indeed, how frequently and how confidently it has been alleged that the words of institution, as they have been improperly called (I say *improperly*, because baptism was *not* at that time first instituted, but had been practised before), involved a repeal, by declaring that none are to be *baptised* but such as are capable of being *taught*. The well known words are, 'Go ye, therefore, and teach (or disciple) all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.'

"The reply to this is simple and satisfactory; although I am aware how strongly a certain habit of mind in viewing a particular passage tends to prevent the clear perception of the validity of any reasoning directed against the sense thus habitually and systematically affixed to it. Suppose the ordinance of *circumcision* had been to continue, and the command had run in these terms, 'Go ye, therefore, and disciple all nations, *circumcising them* in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things,' &c. Had such language been used, we should have known that children were to have been the

subjects of the presented rite as well as their parents ;—the previously existing practice would have ascertained this. Now should we have been sensible, even with this knowledge, of the smallest impropriety or inconsistency in the use of such language? Would it have appeared to us, even in the slightest degree, contradictory or incongruous? Would it have been understood by the apostles as necessarily excluding children? Would they certainly have inferred from it that, although the *same rite* was to continue, there was to be a change in the *subjects* of it? that none now were to be circumcised but those who were capable of immediate instruction in the will of Christ, and practical compliance with it? No, there is nothing in the terms of the commission that could at all have led them to such a conclusion. They would without hesitation have gone on to circumcise children with their parents as formerly, teaching the parents the mind and will of Christ, and charging them to instruct their rising offspring. And if a commission to *circumcise* given in these terms would not have been understood as necessarily excluding children, it can never be shewn that a commission in the same terms to *baptize* must have been so understood. The practical evidence that the apostles *did not so* understand it, will be afterwards considered. In the mean time, permit me to observe, we have in a parallel passage of Scripture most satisfactory evidence of the justness of these remarks. I refer to Gal. v. 2—5; ‘Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.’ In the 27th verse of the third chapter of the same epistle, the apostle says, ‘for as many of you as have been baptized into Jesus Christ (or ye whosoever have been baptized unto Jesus Christ) have put on Christ.’ From this expression it has been very confidently argued, that *adults only were baptized*, because of ‘putting on Christ’ adults only were capable. Now let this principle of interpretation, or of inference, be

applied to the passage quoted from the 5th chapter. It is an address to *adults*; it expresses things of which *adults only were capable*. Are we then to infer from this, that adults only were circumcised? We certainly ought, on the same principle on which we infer from the other that adults alone were *baptized*. There is precisely the same ground in the former case, as there is in the latter. Yet we know that in the latter the inference would be contrary to fact; for nothing can be more certain, than that, when Gentile converts were circumcised, it was in conformity with Jewish practice, *along with their children*.

"It is by many strongly denied, that any peculiar regard or favour is shewn to children on account of their parents, as being inconsistent with the freedom of divine grace. But that God does shew such regard to children for the sake of their parents, we find both intimated and exemplified in many parts of Scripture history. God represents himself, *Exod. xx. 5, 6*, as 'visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate him, and shewing mercy unto thousands (of generations) of them that love him and keep his commandments.' Now without entering into any discussion of the precise or full meaning of these expressions, I would merely remark, that the latter surely cannot be considered as less consistent with the freedom of mercy, than the former with the strictness of justice. There is an expression also used by Paul, respecting the Jews in their present state of unbelief, which appears to me inexplicable, except on some such principle: 'As touching the election,' says he, 'they are beloved for the fathers' sakes.'^{*} If a peculiarity of regard is not in these words expressed towards the natural seed of Abraham, God's friend, for the sake of him, and of their other godly fathers, with whom Jehovah established his covenant, I am at a loss to imagine what meaning the expression can have.

"I have endeavoured to shew that the covenant made with Abraham was the gospel covenant, the covenant of grace, under which we live, and which is the basis of the

^{*} Rom. xi. 28.

New Testament Church; that the ordinance of circumcision was attached to that covenant, and, as the sign of its blessings and the seal of its promises, was by divine command administered to children: that although there is abundant evidence of a change in the rite or ordinance, there is none whatever of any such change in its administration as excludes children from being any longer the legitimate subjects of its observance.

“It has been alleged that, in regard to infant baptism, *the New Testament is silent, and this silence alone is sufficient to set it aside.* We deny the truth of the affirmation that the New Testament is silent on the subject. We think it contains intimations of the connexion of children with their parents in the promises of the covenant, and the blessings of the kingdom of heaven, and also of the apostolic practice in regard to their baptism, exactly such as the circumstances of the case might have led us to expect.

“The Baptists prove adults to have been baptized on a profession of faith, but they do not *disprove* the baptism of the *children* of proselytes. ‘Yes,’ say they, ‘they do disprove it; for, as to the baptism of any besides the believing adults themselves, the Scriptures are silent. They speak nothing concerning the baptism of infants; therefore infants ought not to be baptized. Now this is what we deny. It is precisely here that we are at issue. We say they are not silent. We affirm that THERE IS ABUNDANT EVIDENCE OF THE FACT, THAT INSTEAD OF ANY CHANGE EXCLUSIVE OF CHILDREN HAVING TAKEN PLACE UNDER THE NEW TESTAMENT DISPENSATION, THE CHILDREN OF CONVERTS TO THE FAITH OF THE GOSPEL WERE ACTUALLY BAPTIZED ALONG WITH THEIR PARENTS, IN THE TIME OF THE APOSTLES AND THE APOSTOLIC CHURCHES.

“We ought to bear in mind what was the previous state of things in regard to children, and their connexion with their parents in the application of the sign and seal of the covenant—what this was I need not repeat; I merely remind” this Court “of it. The connexion and symbolical recognition of it existed not only amongst Jewish families themselves, but

extended to the case of Gentiles professing the faith of Abraham—proselytes to Judaism. A head of a family was received into the community of Israel, with *his household*. When I say, with his household, I mean his infant children, and such of the adults as professed the same faith with himself. What I wish” this Court to bear in mind “is simply this, that the connexion of children with their parents, of which I have been speaking, existed of old, and was interwoven with all the thoughts, and feelings, and practices of the ancient church. It had place in the reception of proselytes. It pervaded and characterized the entire style and language of their sacred books. The connexion of this observation with our argument will appear immediately, when we have remarked,—The language of the prophets, in looking forward to New Testament times, appears to assume, or even to affirm, the continuance in those times of the same connexion that existed of old.

“The language of the New Testament intimates the continuance of the same connexion, and intimates it exactly in such a way as, from the previous state of things, might have naturally been expected.

“I have before observed, how the burden of proof lies on the side of the opponents of infant baptism. They seek a precept in positive terms—Let the infant children of proselytes to the faith of the gospel be baptized with their parents. But we demand a precept in similar positive terms—Let the children of proselytes be no longer admitted, as formerly, to the sign and seal of the blessings of the covenant of God. We call for the production of an express declaration that such admission is inconsistent with the spirituality of the new dispensation. But no such thing is ever said; no hint of such a thing is ever given. So far from it, that let us remark in general terms how the case stands. After finding the connexion in question pervading the Old Testament in the manner we have stated,—the children of the professed people of God circumcised with their parents, and the children of Gentile proselytes to the faith of Abraham introduced with their children by the same rite to the pri-

vileges of the ancient church,—we then come forward to the history of the new dispensation. If this previous state of things were really inconsistent with its spiritual nature, it seems not unreasonable to expect that the language on this point should be plain and decisive. But what is the fact? Instead of plain and decisive intimations of this inconsistency, and of the necessary discontinuance of the practice, we meet with language in perfect accordance with the previous state of things—precisely such as writers whose minds are habituated to it would naturally use, and such as readers in similar circumstances could not understand in any other way than one.—‘They brought young children to him that he should touch them; and his disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them:’ ‘Jesus said to him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham:’—‘Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost: for the promise is to you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call:’—‘A certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, who worshipped God, heard us; whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended to those things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us,’ &c.:—‘They said unto him, Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house: and they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house: and he was baptized, he and all his, straightway:’—‘I baptized also the household of Stephanas:’—‘The unbelieving husband is sanctified by the believing wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the believing husband: else were your

children unclean ; but now are they holy.* It is not on one or another of these texts, taken separately, that I am resting my argument under this particular. It is on the intimation which, when taken together, they so clearly afford of the continuance of the same state of things in regard to families as formerly.

“I shall now” request the attention of the Court “to two or three of the pssages taken separately. ‘Then Peter said, Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins ; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is to you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord your God shall call.’†

“These words were addressed by a Jew to fellow Jews. How would such an audience understand them? When they heard of a promise *to them and to their children*, could their minds fail, on such an occasion, to go back to the promise of the covenant made with their fathers, and declared to be to them and to their seed after them? And in that case there was but one sense in which the hearers of Peter could understand the designation ‘your children.’ And if they did so understand his words, they must have conceived of them as assuming and intimating the continuance of the same connexion. Are we then to suppose that this ‘holy man of God, speaking as he was moved by the Holy Ghost,’ would, without explanation or restriction, at the very ‘beginning of the Gospel,’ in his first address to his countrymen, when a right impression was of so much consequence, employ expressions that were fitted to convey to their minds a false and worldly view of the nature of the Messiah’s kingdom?

‘And they brought young children to him,’ &c.‡ Of this kingdom of God, young children (infants) are here most explicitly declared to be subjects—partakers of its privileges and blessings. If, as some allege, the phrase ‘of such’ means of *persons possessing the dispositions of children*, it

* Mark x. 13—16; Luke xix. 9; Acts ii. 39.; xvi. 14, 15, and 31—33;

1 Cor. i. 16; vii. 14. † Acts ii. 38, 39. ‡ Mark x. 13—16.

means this beyond all question, *inclusively of children themselves*. If not, the reason for receiving them would have been as applicable to lambs or doves, as to children: besides that the words which follow ascertain their being included—‘Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God *as a little child* (*i. e.* surely, as a little child receives it), he shall in no case enter therein.’ The Sovereign of this kingdom, then, distinctly recognizes little children among his subjects.” Let this Court “recollect, then, the previous state of things; and let me ask it, Is this at all like the language of exclusion? The persons by whom these children were brought to Jesus, professed, in the very act of bringing them, their faith in him, and the value they set on his blessing.

“‘Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come *to this house*, forso much as he also is a son of Abraham:’—‘When she was baptized, *and her household*:’—‘Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, *and thy house*:’—‘He was baptized, *he, and all his*, straightway.’—I baptized also *the household of Stephanas*.’

“These passages, relating to *families*, I take of course together. The general argument from them, arising from the continuance of a phraseology corresponding to the previous state of things, I have before considered. As to *that* view of the argument, I feel no anxiety about the question, whether there were infant children in those families or not. As the passages, however, have been the occasion of no small controversy, a few additional observations are indispensable.

“In the first place, then, there is one point of fact undeniably clear, namely, that the apostles baptized *households or families*. As to this, there can be no question. It should be noticed, too, that a man’s house (*οικος*) most properly means his children, his offspring, his descendants,—and is generally used to denote these even exclusively.

“Secondly; to an unprejudiced reader of the New Testament, it must, I think, be equally clear that the baptism of families is mentioned in a way that indicates its being no *extraordinary* occurrence, but *a thing of course*. This is

remarkably the case as to Lydia. 'The Lord opened her heart, that she attended to the things which were spoken by Paul. And *when she was baptized, and her family*, she besought us saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there.' I cannot but consider any person unreasonable, who will not admit that the mode of expression here is one which would naturally be used respecting a thing that was customary. And it is worthy of notice, moreover, that the baptism of her family is immediately connected in the record with *her own* reception of the truth, and that upon *her own* faithfulness to the Lord she founds her plea for their coming under her roof. Similar remarks might be made as to the case of the Philippian jailer, who was baptized, *he and all his*, straightway.

Thirdly; having thus the unquestionable fact of the *baptism of families*, a fact according with the ancient practice of the circumcision of families, and supported by the use of a word that properly denotes a man's children or offspring, we are warranted to assume that such was the usual practice, unless our baptist brethren can shew that the cases of Lydia and Stephanas were in the circumstances of them *extraordinary*, and therefore not fair specimens of what was customary. Here is the turning point on this part of the argument; if they cannot make out this, or if they cannot make it out without unnatural straining and inadmissible suppositions, our ground is firm.

"We know the strength of attachment to ancient institutions felt and manifested by the Jewish converts to the faith of the gospel, their extreme reluctance to part even with those observances which belonged exclusively to that system of shadows, of which the body was Christ. They were still 'zealous for the law:' and they shewed their zeal by their indignation at Paul, for having, as they had been informed, taught their countrymen that they should not 'circumcise their children, neither walk after their customs.' Is it likely, then, nay, is it at all conceivable, on the supposition of the new system entirely excluding children from its appropriate rites, that not a hint should appear of any one having been

startled by the change,—that not a symptom should have discovered itself of any disposition to object or complain? That to Jewish eyes it must have appeared an innovation of no trifling magnitude, will not be questioned by any one who duly considers how strongly the connexion, supposed to be disannulled, was sanctioned in their minds, by the sacred provisions of God's covenant with their venerated fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; how firmly it was settled in their practice, not only by the regular circumcision of their own offspring, but also by the admission of Gentiles *by families* into the communion of Israel; and how intimately it was incorporated with all their most favourite and cherished conceptions.

“Another remarkable circumstance akin to the preceding is,—that when the Judaizing teachers insisted on the Gentile converts submitting to circumcision,—although there can be no doubt that this was done in every case, *in connexion with their children*:—yet when the doctrine and practice of these perverters of the gospel came to be discussed in the assembly of the apostles, and elders, and brethren, at Jerusalem, no notice whatsoever is taken of the inconsistency with the spirituality of the new dispensation of administering any sign to *children*, on the admission of their parents into the Christian commonwealth—or of treating them as if they continued to have any connexion at all with their parents, in reference to the blessings of the covenant or of the church of God.

“Now, surely, if such connexion really was inconsistent with the spirituality of the Gospel and the New Testament Church, it must have been an error of no trifling moment; and it is reasonable to conclude, that, upon an occasion which brought the subject so immediately and formally under notice, some disapproval should have been intimated and recorded of the error itself, and the practice founded upon it; and the absence of all such intimation is a collateral evidence, that there was no such inconsistency, and that children were to be held and treated as sustaining the same covenant relation to their parents as formerly. I hope I am

clearly understood. When these Judaizing teachers insisted on the circumcision of Gentile proselytes to the faith and profession of the gospel, they, doubtless, administered the rite according to the instituted and universal practice, the children being circumcised with the parent.

“Let it be further considered, that we have no recorded instance of the baptism of any person grown to manhood, that had been born of Jewish converts or of Gentile proselytes to the faith of Christ;—nor have we, in any of the apostolic epistles to the churches, the remotest allusion, in the form of direction, or of warning, to the reception of such children by baptism into the Christian church upon their professing the faith in which they had been brought up.

“Our baptist brethren present us, in support of their system, with instances of the baptism of *adults*. They would do something more to their purpose if they could produce one or two examples of the baptism of *such adults* as those mentioned; these would be in point. But nothing of the kind is to be found—nothing in the form, either of fact, or allusion, or advice, or precept.

“The circumstances of the early history of the Church, after the apostolic age, are unaccountable on antipædobaptist principles; because Origen, Cyprian, Justin Martyr, and Austin say, in their day it was the custom to baptize infants.

“It has often been asked by antipædobaptists, What are the uses of infant baptism? What good ends are answered by it? It ought first to be observed, however, that with regard to all such questions as the one so often put, and so confidently answered, there is obviously a previous question, *Is it, or is it not, a divine institution?* If it be once shewn to possess the authority of the Supreme Lawgiver, it will not be disputed that our first and immediate duty is compliance.

“We however freely admit, it is reasonable to expect that there should be some uses apparent of whatever the God of infinite wisdom enjoins; and, on the present occasion, we feel no difficulty in meeting the enquiry. Of baptism, as administered to infants, we are at no loss to point out uses

which we conceive to be of no trivial magnitude. We shall endeavour to shew these by considering it in the two following lights—First, AS A MEMORIAL OF FUNDAMENTAL TRUTHS:—Secondly, AS A REMEMBRANCE OF IMPORTANT DUTIES, AND AN ENCOURAGEMENT TO THEIR PERFORMANCE.

“In considering infant baptism in the former of these views, it becomes necessary to take some notice in the first place of the general signification of the rite itself. It appears then to me very evident that the emblematic significance of baptism is to be found in the *purifying nature of the element employed in it, in the cleansing of water*. Almost every instance in which the ordinance is spoken of, or alluded to, with any intimation of its meaning, might be adduced in proof of this. The following passages are but a specimen of many: ‘And now why tarriest thou? arise and be baptized, and *wash away thy sins*, calling on the the name of the Lord.’* ‘Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might *sanctify and cleanse it by the washing of water* through the word: that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.’† In this latter passage, spiritual purification is no doubt intended: but it contains such an allusion to the ordinance of baptism with water, as leads us to conclude that this spiritual purification is what it is designed principally to represent.—A similar allusion there seems to be in Titus iii. 5; ‘Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the *washing of regeneration* and renewing of the Holy Ghost.

“From these and other passages, it appears that baptism, by the emblem of the cleansing virtue of water, denotes the removal of sin in its guilt and in its pollution.

“But according to the views of our Baptist brethren, *washing or cleansing*, so far from being the exclusive, is not even the principal, but only a secondary meaning: whilst the general tenor, of the language of Scripture, as well as a number of particular passages, seem to place its symbolical

* Acts xxii. 16.

† Eph. v. 25, 26.

meaning in the *nature of the element employed*, it is by them placed principally, and by some of them, indeed, as would appear from their manner of expressing themselves, almost solely, *in the mode in which that element is used*.

“The passages referred to by them in support of this notion are the two following ; ‘ Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death ? therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death : that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.’* ‘ Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him, through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.’† In these passages, our brethren conceive there is an obvious reference to the mode of baptism by immersion.

“Two things may just be noticed here, before proceeding to the explanation of the passages. The first is, that it is obviously incorrect to speak of the ordinance as exhibiting the death of Christ, as well as his burial and resurrection ; for whatever resemblance fancy may imagine to the two latter, there is scarcely no representation of the former. The death can only be considered as *implied* in the *burial*. The second is, that even to the burial and resurrection of Christ, the immersion of a body under water, and its emersion from it, bear but a very indistinct and remote resemblance. The mind may easily indeed habituate itself to the idea of likeness between being let down under *earth* and raised out of it, and being let down under *water* and raised out of it. But where is the likeness between the latter of these and the carrying of a body by a lateral door into a cavern hewn out of a rock, and that body reviving and coming forth by the same door ? I confess this resemblance, on which so much stress is laid by our Baptist brethren, has always appeared to me but a far-fetched fancy. I shall say nothing stronger, lest I should possibly be in the wrong in so considering it.

“‘To be baptized into Christ’ is to be baptized into the faith of him as the Messiah, into the faith of his divine

* Rom. vi. 3, 4.

† Col. ii. 12.

mission, character, and work. To be 'baptized into his death,' is to be baptized into the faith of his death, in the view which the gospel gives of it, as the death of a surety or substitute making atonement for the sins of those for whom he died. Now by being thus 'baptized into his death,' says the apostle, we are 'buried with him.' The simple meaning of this expression evidently is, that by being baptized into the faith of his death, as the death of our surety and substitute, we become partakers with him in it. When the apostle, pursuing his beautiful illustration of this spiritual connexion of believers with Christ, and the practical obligations thence arising, says, in the 8th verse, 'Now if we be *dead with Christ*, we believe that we shall also live with him,' he uses a phrase of equivalent import with the one before us. To be *dead with Christ* and to be *buried with Christ*, are the same thing. The latter of the two phrases appears to be used in the fourth verse, chiefly for the sake of *completing the apostle's figure*, as it was necessary, in order to Christ's *rising*; that he should *be laid in the grave*: so *in the figure*, it is necessary that we should be viewed as *buried with him*, in order to our *rising with him* to newness of life.

"The simple meaning is this: since in our being baptized into Jesus Christ we were baptized *into his death*—into the faith of his death, as the death of a surety, we may be considered as by faith partaking with him in his death, as *buried with him*, and that with the special end of our rising with him in a spiritual resemblance to his resurrection, and 'walking in newness of life.' Now it is quite obvious that the argument of the apostle has not the remotest connexion with the *mode of baptism*. There is not the most distant occasion for the supposition of any such allusion, in order to render the passage intelligible, nor does the allusion when supposed impart to it any addition of force or propriety. The meaning does not in the least degree depend on the manner of performing the ceremony; it turns entirely on its being baptism *into Christ's death*. Provided it was this, it makes not the smallest difference to the apostle's statement,

or argument, or conclusion, whether we suppose it to have been by immersion, by pouring, or by sprinkling.

“The same observations apply with at least equal, if not greater force, to the parallel passage, Col. ii. 12. Believers are there said to be ‘risen,’ as well as ‘buried, with Christ in baptism.’ They were not baptized into the faith of Christ’s *death* alone, as the death of their surety; they were baptized also into the faith of his resurrection, as the resurrection of their surety. And as by the former they became, in virtue of their connexion with him as a surety, partakers with him in his death, so by the latter they became in the same way partakers with him also in his resurrection. Being baptized into the faith of both, they had, by faith, fellowship or union with him in both. How is it accordingly that they are said to be ‘risen with him’? It is ‘through the faith of the operation of God, who raised him from the dead;’ that is, through the faith of his resurrection, effected by the operation or mighty power of God. Their being ‘risen with him in baptism’ does not therefore refer to any emblematic representation of a resurrection in the mode of the ordinance; but to their being one with him in his resurrection, through faith in him, as the surety of sinners. And with this view they might, with perfect propriety, be said to be ‘risen with him in baptism,’ whatever was the mode of its administration, provided only it was baptism into the faith of his resurrection.

“It has indeed been alleged, that in whatever sense believers are said to be buried and risen with Christ, they could not be represented as so buried and risen in *baptism*, unless there were in that ordinance some *representation* of that burial and resurrection. I observe, in reply, 1st, Although the expression in Col. ii. 12 is, ‘buried with him in baptism,’ yet in Rom. vi. 4, it is different, ‘buried with him by baptism into his death,’ which does not at all imply any such similitude in the ordinance, but directs the attention to *that into which they were baptized*; which, indeed, as I have noticed, is the point on which the whole reasoning turns. 2dly, Although it was, strictly speaking, *in believing*

that these converts became partakers with Christ in his death and resurrection; yet it is not unusual to speak of things taking place in baptism, which properly took place *by faith*, because baptism was the first public declaration of the faith of the converts, and of their belonging to the body of Christ. It is on the same principle that they are spoken of as, *in baptism*, 'washing away their sins,' and 'putting on Christ.' 3dly, In Rom. vi. the language of the whole passage is figurative.

"Being myself thoroughly convinced that the significance and appropriateness of the rite arise from the cleansing nature of the element employed, and not from the mode of its application, I am disposed to consider the mode as of comparatively inferior importance. It is in the application of water, as the emblem of the purifying influence of the Spirit of Truth, that the ordinance properly consists. A baptist brother may smile at me when I say, that on this ground I have no hesitation in admitting immersion to be valid baptism.

"Even were it to be admitted that *immersion* is the original or primary import of the word baptism (which is only the Greek word Anglicised), yet the sole enquiry ought to be, not what is the strict, original, etymological sense of the word, but *what is the sense in which it is used by the Scripture writers*. And it has long appeared to me, that the reading and comparing with each other of such texts as the following,* should be enough to satisfy any candid man, that sprinkling and pouring, so far from being without the countenance of these writers in their use of the term, are uniformly recognised by them, in their incidental explanations of it, as its true and proper counterparts.

"'As Peter began to speak, the Holy Spirit *fell on* all them who heard the word, and they of the circumcision were astonished, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.'" Let the court then "look at

* Mark vii. 3, 4. Numb. xix. 18. Heb. ix. 10. 1 Cor. x. 2. Isaiah xliv. 3. Acts ii. 34. Titus iii. 5, 6. Acts xi. 15, 16. Ezek. xxxvi. 25. Psalm li. 7. Heb. ix. 13, 14. Isaiah lii. 15.

Peter's words. The Holy Spirit was *poured out*, and Peter called to mind the promise, which of course he considered as being then fulfilled—'ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' According to Peter, then, *baptism* was effected by pouring out. Till better authority be produced, I desire to bow to this.

"It is, I repeat, in *the application of water as a cleansing element* that the appropriateness of the rite consists. Were this admitted, I should not be disposed, as I have before hinted, to consider the mode of its application as essential to the validity of the ordinance. I must, however, declare my conviction, that whilst I have produced decisive instances of baptism, in the phraseology of the New Testament, being equivalent to *effusion*, I have never yet seen an instance established of its necessarily or certainly signifying *immersion*." The court will therefore perceive, "that when I say I can admit immersion to be valid baptism, I do not mean that it has been administered according to the mode practised by the apostles. All that I mean is, that if baptism had already been administered by immersion, I should not reckon it necessary to administer it again by affusion or sprinkling.

"John baptized 'in Jordan.' 'In the river Jordan.' Such expressions are inconclusive, for this obvious reason, that they are equally suitable on the supposition of *pouring* having been the mode of baptism, as on that of *immersion*. Had John stood in the water, however shallow, or had he stood in the bed of the river at the water's edge, and poured the water on those who came to his baptism, the historian not only might have used the same expression with propriety, but could hardly have used another.

"In Acts viii. 38, 39, it is said, 'They went down both into the water, both Philip and the Eunuch, and he baptized him; and when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the Eunuch saw him no more.' Nothing can be clearer than this; the *act of baptizing* is something quite distinct from either *the going down into the water*, or *the coming up out of it*. If

these two phrases had any reference at all to the mode of baptism, it would follow that Philip was immersed under the water, and emerged out of it, as well as the Eunuch, which no one supposes. The plain meaning is, that Philip and the Eunuch descended together from the chariot *to*, or, if you will, into, the water; that when they had so descended, Philip baptized the Eunuch, but in what way, not a hint is given; and that this being done, they ascended together again out of, or from, the water.

“The remarks I have made are intended to shew, from the plain statements of the New Testament itself, that baptism was performed by sprinkling or pouring, and that there is no necessity for any learned appeal to other authorities. This appeal has been made by pædobaptists, and made in my judgment with success. They do not deny that the verbs βαπτω and βαπτίζω signify to dip or immerse; but they do deny that this is their only signification, when they are used by the sacred writers.

“Infant baptism contains a constant memorial of *original sin*—of the corruption of our nature being not merely contracted, but *inherent*: every time it is administered to an infant, it emblematically reminds all who witness it of the truth expressed by the Psalmist, ‘Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.’ Baptism teaches very simply, but very significantly, that even from the womb children are the subjects of pollution; that they stand in need of a participation in the pardon of the original apostacy, and of purification from the inherent depravity of their nature, in order to their entering heaven and seeing God.

“That infant baptism contains a practical testimony, from the divine author of the institution, to the necessity of regeneration, is a very different thing from it being regeneration itself, or invariably accompanied by it in its infant subject. The doctrine of baptismal regeneration is, in many respects, as pernicious in its tendencies as it is absurd on principles of reason, and destitute of foundation in Scripture. It is an abuse, for which, as for many others, the ordinance

itself is not responsible. The only wonder is, that any man of common sense should ever have maintained it.

“It is a doctrine of the Church of Rome, and it harmonizes well with the innumerable absurdities of that anti-christian communion. It is contained also in the Articles and Baptismal Service of the Church of England, constituting one of the remnants of popery, of which there are too many in the constitution and ceremonies of our Episcopalian Establishment. I am aware, indeed, that on the present subject, the sense in which the terms employed are to be understood, has been the ground of very vehement controversy; but their simple and *prima facie* meaning is without question favourable to this foolish and mischievous tenet.

“Far be it from us to deny that infants may be acknowledged to be of the kingdom of God without baptizing them; far be it from us to pass any such sentence of exclusion against the children of our Baptist brethren, however much we may think their parents mistaken. We do not consider the outward rite as thus essential to salvation. But this we say, that if infants are capable subjects of the kingdom, and are pronounced such by the Lord himself, there is surely no contradiction or incongruity in infant baptism, that is, in the application of the *sign* to those who are admitted to be capable of the thing signified. There is certainly nothing in this that can warrant the scorn and ridicule with which it has been assailed.

“Let it not be said the ground of ridicule is, that infants are incapable of that faith which the New Testament affirms to be necessary to baptism, and of which baptism is the profession. It has often been remarked, and it has never been satisfactorily answered, that this mode of reasoning, if valid for the exclusion of infants from baptism, must be equally valid for their exclusion from salvation. If it be a correct syllogism—Believing is necessary to baptism; infants are incapable of believing; therefore no infants ought to be baptized; the following must be correct too—Believing is necessary to salvation; infants are incapable of believing; therefore infants cannot be saved.

“When our blessed Redeemer took the little children in his arms, and said, ‘of such is the kingdom of heaven,’ he added solemnly to his disciples, ‘Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God *as a little child*, he shall not enter therein.’ When an infant receives the blessings of the kingdom, it is gratuitously; not as the reward of works of righteousness; not in the exercise of high minded self-confidence. So must it be with *you*, says the Saviour, the Lord of the kingdom; you must be ‘justified freely by the grace of God;’ you must own yourselves undeserving, and receive all as a gift; whatever you have done, you must come for the blessings of my kingdom as if you had done nothing, and receive them as little children. This was levelled at the spiritual pride and self-righteousness of the Pharisees, against which he, on other occasions also, warns his disciples. Every time the ordinance is administered to a child, all who witness it may be considered as having the words of Christ symbolically repeated in their hearing—‘Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of heaven as a *little child*, he shall not enter therein.’ It is not the fault of the ordinance, but of its administrator and witnesses, if such impressions are not made.

“Having considered infant baptism as a memorial of fundamental truths, let me now proceed to view it as a REMEMBRANCE OF IMPORTANT DUTIES, AND AN ENCOURAGEMENT TO THEIR PERFORMANCE.

“The ordinance is inseparably connected, and all Christian parents ought so to regard it, with the incumbent duty of ‘bringing up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.’ If this connexion is lost sight of,—if it is not contemplated at the time, and is practically disregarded afterwards,—the ordinance becomes nothing better than an useless ceremony, and an idle and profane mockery of its Divine Author. It is evident that the pouring a little water on an infant’s face can in itself do it no good; and as little would the immersion of its whole body. The mere external recognition of its connexion with the Christian community

can be of no benefit, except as associated with subsequent training for the performance of the duties and the enjoyment of the blessings of that community. The profit of the child must be through the medium of the parent; and it has long appeared to me that it is to the parent, rather than to the child, that infant baptism is in the first instance to be reckoned a privilege. It is an ordinance in which there is brought before the minds of pious parents a pleasing and animating recognition of the covenant promises of God to them and to their offspring, which forms so great an encouragement to them in the discharge of duty, and in looking by prayer for the Divine blessing upon the objects of their tender love. That multitudes, who have their children baptized, never think of the ordinance in any such light, and are quite regardless of the obligations which I will not say it imposes, but which it implies, and brings to mind, is a melancholy truth. And I would earnestly admonish those parents of the guilt they are contracting by their solemn mockery of heaven, in the careless profanation of a divine institution; the abuse is awfully extensive.

“We consider baptism as an ordinance for *believers and their children*. I am aware, indeed, that I do not express the sentiment of *all* pædobaptists, when I say, that the administration of it to children ought to be confined to those of *believers only*; for I am well aware of the different sentiments entertained, and the different course pursued, by many (I might, I fear, say by *most*) of my pædobaptist brethren in the South of Great Britain. I cannot but think them very far in the wrong; and I have never been able to find any thing like fixed and precise ground amongst them on this subject. Some place the warrant for baptizing in a willingness to be instructed: some, in a general profession of Christianity, and of faith in the Bible: others, in the attendance of the party applying for it at church, and bringing his family with him, so as to put them in the way of good: while others still, I believe, go so far as to concur with the Established Church of England, and administer it to all who apply, considering it as the privilege of the child,

without regard to the profession and character of the parent at all. Now in all this there is an undefined and unsettled laxity, which appears to me highly pernicious in its practical consequences; and which, moreover, tends to weaken, and even, if followed fairly out, to overthrow, the whole of the argument for infant baptism that is founded on the covenant relation, so distinctly recognized in Scripture, between parent and child.

“The chief ground on which a looser principle than the one I have assumed has been usually vindicated by our southern brethren, has been derived from the practice of the Jewish church in regard to circumcision. All children that were Jews by birth, it is alleged, were indiscriminately admitted to the prescribed ordinance, their parents professing faith in the God of Abraham, and no evidence being required at the time of the genuineness of that profession; and we should proceed on a similar principle in regard to baptism.

“The Jewish church was national. When the new dispensation was introduced, it was no longer to be so. Its constitution was to be remodelled. The wicked were to be shaken out of it. It was to be revived and purified. It was not to consist of nations, but of individuals of all nations, separated from the world by the grace of God.

“To the children of godly parents, I would briefly, but affectionately say—You enjoy, or you have enjoyed, a most precious privilege; a blessing for which you cannot be too thankful. If your parents considered aright what they were doing when they presented you to the Lord in the ordinance of baptism, it was not with them a season of thoughtless merriment, on the giving of a name to their child, but a time of tender feeling, of serious reflection, of solicitous anticipation, of solemn prayer. They brought you in faith to the Lord; they resolved that you should be trained in his fear; and they looked with earnest desire for the grace of God to enable them to fulfil their resolution. I speak not of vows made by them in your name; and far less of god-fathers and god-mothers, stepping in between you and your parents, and taking upon themselves a gratuitous responsibility in your

behalf; because I find none of these things in my Bible, and regard them, along with some other practices, as inventions of men, human appendages to a simple institution. But at your baptism your parents had before them a remembrancer of obligations.

“It is true that ‘Except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God’—he cannot be received into it above, and is not a fit member of it below. But in the case of children, brought up in the ‘nurture and admonition of the Lord,’ the change which is thus expressed may often be, nay often is, imperceptible in its first commencement, and gradual in its subsequent progress; so that time and circumstances cannot be specified. This is what from the nature of the case we might reasonably anticipate. I do not say that there is such a thing as hereditary grace; but as the grace of God, in its various blessings, is conveyed to sinners *by means*, it quite accords with the natural order of things, that it should accompany those means, and flow, as it were, in the same channel with them. And although his grace is not imparted by fleshly birth, yet that, when his people are attentive to the means appointed, this grace should appear descending through their generations, cannot at all be matter of wonder.

“I conclude” my evidence “with one general caution:—Let all beware of trusting, in any measure, for their salvation, to any outward observance. The Jews, who trusted and glorified in their circumcision, mistook and perverted its design, to the dishonour of Abraham and to the God of Abraham, and to their own everlasting perdition. You have been baptized; as to the present view of the matter, it is of no consequence whether by sprinkling or immersion, whether in infancy or adult years. If you fancy yourselves Christians, because you have been baptized, you are in the same fatal error in which the Jews were, who imagined themselves the children of Abraham and of God, because they were circumcised. Be not deceived. Those Jews perished without remedy, notwithstanding their circumcision, who refused to ‘submit themselves to the righteousness of

God,' and of which, when properly understood, it was the sign and the seal. So must all without remedy perish, notwithstanding their baptism and their other outward privileges, who are not 'born again,' by being made partakers of like precious faith with Abraham. Circumcision could not save the one; neither can baptism save the other. Mere natural descent from Abraham could not save the one; neither can mere natural relation to godly parents save the other. All the variety of external privilege and observance could not save the one; outward connexion with the purest church on earth, and the most punctilious attendance upon all its institutions, cannot save the other. 'He was not a Jew who was one outwardly, neither was that circumcision which was outward in the flesh; but he was a Jew who was one inwardly, and circumcision was that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men but of God.' He is not a Christian who is one outwardly, neither is that *baptism* which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Christian who is one inwardly, and baptism is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men but of God. 'In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.' *"

* Rom. ii. 28, 29.—Gal. vi. 15.

THE SEVENTH WITNESS.

I, the SEVENTH WITNESS, "have long felt myself particularly called upon to" give my evidence on this subject, "from the circumstance of having published some explanations, connected with it, of certain Greek prepositions, and verbs, and nouns, in my Greek Grammar, and Greek and English Scripture Lexicon.

"Reasons may be assigned, though not to justify, yet to account for, much of the ignorance which prevails among Christians, respecting Baptism. When they first have their attention directed to the observance of ordinances, they do not usually take much notice of baptism, which they believe they have already received, but rather of the Lord's supper, which they desire to partake of, as the highest privilege of saints on earth.

"I am aware that many have been long ago shouting victory, in this contest. The duty of immersing in water those who are to be baptized, and of requiring that none shall be baptized till they have made a profession of the faith, is alleged to be so plain an article of Christian doctrine, that the man who hears the gospel, and rejects that article, must be wilfully disobedient. But it may well abate this confidence, and should humble us all, to see the battle continuing to rage, without the smallest appearance of termination.

"Christians are actually beginning to despair of any result from the existing controversy. Even among Protestants, whose principle it is that the Scriptures are a sufficient rule of faith and practice, several churches have been of late years formed on an understood acknowledgment, that the word of God gives no explicit instruction to his people on so rudimental a subject as the ordinance of Baptism. Every member is therefore left to do respecting it that which

is right in his own eyes : and it is agreed, that whatever each may think or do for himself, that ordinance shall, in no form, and in no case, be admitted into any part of their public worship.

“ While I confess that I am chiefly struck with the inefficacy of the discussion on both sides, I mean not to deny that Antipædobaptist sentiments have for several years been making considerable progress. It is not wonderful, if this progress be regarded by those of that persuasion, as a proof that their sentiments are supported by the force of truth. To me it appears to be a consequence of the mixture of error and inconsistent practice in those, who before held the truth generally on the controverted subject.

“ It unfortunately happens, that the ordinance of baptism has come into Protestant churches with an uncommonly large share of the superstitions and absurdities of the church of Rome.

“ Who can be surprised at the number of Antipædobaptists, in the southern part of the Island, where it is the general system to baptize all children, and, at the same time, to exclude all parents from any part in the matter ; where the whole service is a transaction between a priest and certain sureties called god-fathers and god-mothers ; where the priest is made to talk, as if to the child, and the sureties are made to answer in his name ; where a formal bargain is struck, between Christ on the one hand, and the child on the other, in consideration of certain promises to be performed by each party to the other ; where the priest must pray that the water to be used may be made holy ; where he is directed to dip the child in water ‘ if he may well endure it,’ and yet uniformly pours water upon him, not as being right, but that which shall suffice, if they certify that the child is weak, and which is made to suffice whether he be weak or not ; where, after baptizing, the priest makes a cross upon the child’s forehead, and gives thanks to God for his regeneration.

“ Many of the most flagrant of these abuses are little known in Scotland ; and yet baptism is, according to the general system in this country, dispensed without due regard

to the character of the parents. At the same time, it is connected with the imposition of vows on parents, which are altogether unknown in Scripture, but which they must either submit to, or forfeit their privilege, and which it is intended the child shall take upon himself, if he ever desire to be admitted to the Lord's supper; before baptism, prayer is, as in the other case, offered up that the water be made holy; baptism is described as sprinkling and washing, and again as pouring or sprinkling, which it is declared is not only lawful, but sufficient and most expedient.

"The one National church avows a preference for immersion, while she tolerates the neglect of it, and that upon the foolish supposition that a cold bath may be more than an infant can 'well endure'; refuses the privilege of Christian parents, while she baptizes all children without distinction; and leaves it as matter of dispute whether Baptism and Regeneration be not one and the same thing. The other National church calls baptism washing, confounds pouring and sprinkling, and recommends what it thus represents as one mode, as merely lawful, sufficient, and most expedient; all which terms admit the inference, that another mode, namely immersion, may possibly have been the original practice.

"Independents have not left this ordinance in so vague and ambiguous a condition, as Episcopalians or Presbyterians have done; in regard, however, to the disputed points, they have commonly satisfied themselves with bare self-defence. They have found little or no fault with the principles and practice of Antipædobaptists; but have endeavoured to vindicate themselves for not following their example. They have said (some of them at least) that immersion was no doubt baptism, but that pouring was baptism also; that the infants of believers have a right to be baptized, and that therefore the parents are justifiable in claiming it in their favour; but some of them seem to have very little sense of their obligations to require that parents in their communion do their duty in this matter.

"The tendency of this negative and slovenly manner of

treating the subject is to generate scepticism. The careless disregard the controversy as unprofitable, while the timid are frightened into the system of the Antipædobaptists. They see all allow that immersion is right, but the other mode they find to be by some contested: all allow that Antipædobaptists are themselves baptized, although they hold that others have no baptism, either for themselves or their children. They prefer immersion, therefore, and join the Antipædobaptists, on the principle of taking the safest side of a difficult question.

“I hope that Christians of the Antipædobaptist persuasion will not regard my evidence as a token of hostility. An endeavour to detect error, and to establish truth, is an act of friendship to every member of the body of Christ. That the difference of judgment I am to treat of appears to me a very serious one, I frankly acknowledge. But the general articles of the faith of our opponents, the constitution and government of their churches, and the excellence of their Christian character, are, for the most part, so unexceptionable, and so distinguished, that if through the blessing of God we could but come to an agreement on this ordinance of baptism, there would remain nothing to prevent our most cordial union.

“It is inaccurate to explain baptism to be washing. It is not washing, but a figure of washing. This is true, in whatever way it may be administered. It is also inaccurate to call baptism sprinkling. There is another form, which is thought to belong to the ordinance of baptism, commonly called immersion. It consists in putting the subject of baptism completely under water, and then lifting him up again. This is a transaction between one man and another, which, for any purpose, common or sacred, I have not been able to meet with in the Holy Scriptures.

“What then do I conceive to be the Scriptural form of the ordinance of baptism? It is the pouring out of water, from the hand of the baptizer, on the turned-up face of the baptized. This I conceive to be the only Scriptural mode of administering the ordinance.

“Although the word *baptize*, which is a Greek word, occurs in the original text of the New Testament, it is not the word which must have been originally applied to the ordinance which we are now to consider. In the Syriac translation of the New Testament, all the words used for baptizing, baptism, and baptist, are taken from the Hebrew word *עמך*. This word is certainly worthy of particular attention in the present inquiry, because, in the Syro-Chaldaic dialect, it was, in all probability, the very word originally used by John the Baptist as the name of the new ordinance which he administered, when he came to prepare the way of the Lord: the very word used by the messengers, when they asked his reason for dispensing this new ordinance, saying, ‘Why baptizest thou?’

“I am persuaded that the word baptize has never yet been properly analyzed; For example, it has been shown to signify pouring out. But it does not appear to me to have been yet shown how it has come to have this signification. The general understanding seems to be, that immersion is its original meaning; and although authorities are given, and examples are quoted, to prove that it must be sometimes taken in the sense of pouring out, there remains the difficulty of conceiving how so extraordinary a transition should have taken place as that of the derivative *pouring out* from the primitive *plunging in*. It is admitted, perhaps, that there is no arguing against facts; and therefore there may be passages in which pouring out must be supposed to be the meaning of baptize. But still the other is thought to be the more natural interpretation; and therefore, when other words in a passage do not compel to admit the meaning of pouring out, the meaning of immersion is preferred of course.

“This supposition is favoured by another. βαπτίζω (*baptizo*) is derived from βαπτω (*bapto*), but βαπτω (*bapto*) is thought always to signify immerse, or at least always to imply immersion in its signification. Hence it is alleged, we ought to understand βαπτίζω (*baptizo*) as properly implying the same idea.

"I have been led to question these suppositions.—Neither βαπτω nor βαπτίζω signifies to immerse, more than to pour out. Nor are the circumstances of the connexion more needful to affix to baptizing the idea of pouring out, than the idea of immersing. The words are one, and the meaning one.

"I feel myself supported in affirming that the term *pop* is the root of the words which I have proposed to analyze. Will the" court, "then, have the goodness to accustom its ear to the following sounds? Pop-to, pop-tizo, pop-tistes, pop-tos, pop-tismos, and pop-tisma. In this identical form, the root occurs in Greek, in Latin, and in English.

"Keep in mind now the explanation, and apply it to baptism (pop-tism), and you are furnished with a key, which will naturally and consistently account for all its much disputed acceptations. You have only to observe, that a person or thing may be either *popped into* water or any other fluid, or may have water or any other fluid *popped upon*, or *popped into*, him or it, and the whole mystery vanishes.

"Having thus translated the word Baptism (which we have been often challenged to do), we are prepared to shew, that it signifies the application, properly the sudden and slight application, of water, or some other liquid; but, in a more lax sense, the application of it, in any manner, or for any purpose—by effusion, affusion, perfusion, or infusion; by sprinkling, daubing, friction, or immersion; wholly or partially, permanently or for a moment; for purifying or defiling, ornamenting or bespattering, washing away what was found adhering, or covering with what was not there before, &c.

"It is a word which properly denotes operations on a small scale, and of a gentle nature: it is in a secondary sense that it comes to be applied to the vast and the formidable. When I say, 'He popped upon my face a handful of water,' or 'I popped my hand into a bason of water,' I use the word in its proper acceptation. But if I should say—in English (what is not usual indeed in that language, but) what is found sometimes in Greek, 'He popped upon me (pop-tized me,) with an overwhelming flood,' or 'I popped

myself or was popped (pop-tized) into the river, or into the sea,' in these cases the word could only be understood in a secondary, in a figurative, in an exaggerated, rather than in a proper and natural sense.

"Agreeably to these ideas is the use of βαπτω, in Rev. xix. 13; 'and he was clothed in a vesture DIPPED (say our translators) in blood;' (be-popped) — properly 'a vesture BESPATTERED, SPRINKLED, SPOTTED, or STAINED with blood.' In this case, evidently, the vesture was not *popped into* the blood, but the blood was *popped upon* the garment, and thus it was *baptized* with blood.

"The immersing of one person by another, for any purpose except that of medical treatment, or that of murder, I can discover in no writings whatever, sacred or profane.

"I believe the preceding illustration of βαπτω (bap-to) will in substance be found to apply to βαπτίζω (bap-tizo). It has the same root, and the same general meaning. It includes various methods of applying water or other fluids, either in a literal or metaphorical sense. But I never found it to signify, or to include in its signification, the raising out of the water any person or thing which was once immersed in it.

" 'Go wash seven times in Jordan—and Naaman went down and *dipped*,' say our translators (baptized), 'himself seven times in Jordan, according to the word of Elisha.' The court "will please to notice, that if the *baptizing* here should be understood of *immersing*, it would form no objection to my theory, on the meaning of βαπτίζω, which admits immersion to be one of its meanings.

"I have no doubt that Naaman washed every part of his body, and for this good reason, that the leprosy covered every part of his body; but I am persuaded that he did not plunge over head.

"There are many instances, in which βαπτίζω signifies to *immerse*, that is to *pop in*, to *plunge*, or *sink completely under water*. Josephus uses it twice concerning the death of Aristobulus, the brother of Mariamne, who was drowned through Herod's instigation, at Jericho, by certain Greeks,

who enticed him into the water to swim, and then, under pretence of play, *immersed* him, or *kept him under water*, till he died. Again, in the wars of the Jews, chap. xxii. § 2, ‘The young man was sent to Jericho, and there, according to his orders, being *immersed* in a fish-pond, he came to his end.’

“These, I conceive to be genuine instances of *immersion* baptism. As in the case of βαπτω, I have been obliged to go for them to Josephus, and to other writers of merely human authority, because I have not been able to meet with an instance of *immersion baptism* in the Holy Scriptures.

“The ordinance of baptism is the pouring out of water from the hand of the baptizer, on the turned-up face of the baptized. It is connected with the preaching of the gospel, under the gospel dispensation, and particularly relates to the work of the Holy Spirit, as then sent by the Father, in the name of the Son, according to the promise of the everlasting covenant.

“When John had sufficiently prepared the way of the Lord, by his preaching, and by baptizing others, then came Jesus himself to be baptized of him. When John would have hindered him, objecting his own pollution and unworthiness, ‘Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer *it to be* so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.’ The meaning of the ordinance, and the very mode of its administration, implied that, in observing it, our Lord confirmed the truth that the Holy Spirit was about to be given. Immediately afterwards he was to be endowed with his influence, visibly *descending from on high*, and *abiding upon him*.*

“The miracle which thus followed the baptism of the Saviour was declared to be the token, that he should be the person who should baptize the disciples with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.

“‘But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will POUR OUT OF MY SPIRIT UPON all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,’ &c. †

“And the apostles ‘sent unto them Peter and John; who,

* John iii. 34.

† Acts ii. 16—21, 33, 38, 39.

when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost : for as yet he was FALLEN UPON none of them ; only (water had fallen upon them as yet,) they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.* ‘ While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost FELL UPON all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, because that on the gentiles also was POURED OUT the gift of the Holy Ghost.’†

“Is it credible, that a word which signifies the motion of body upon body, in ANY DIRECTION, should when employed to represent both the figure and the reality of a DESCENT FROM ABOVE, be meant to be understood of motion in an OPPOSITE DIRECTION ; that the water, or the wind, or the fire, should, instead of DESCENDING FROM ABOVE, be understood to RISE FROM BELOW, till the subject was swallowed up by it ?

“In the Old Testament ‡ there are various ordinances of ceremonial purification, by bathing or ablution, in which it may be supposed by some that immersion would take place ;” this is very questionable. “But what we would remark at present is, that such purification was always performed by the unclean person himself (and indeed decency requires this, because this kind of purification never appears to have been the immersing of persons with their clothes on), whereas the mode was always different when the purification was administered by another. Now it is essential to Christian Baptism that it be administered by another. The people came to John to be baptized. Even Christ came to John to be baptized of him. In like manner, the disciples were to go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them. And this ordinance was administered, not only by another, but as frequently in public as in private. On both these accounts, we are restrained from regarding it as an application of water *in any way to the whole body*.—It was merely the *pop* of a limited effusion, consistent with decency, yet quite sufficient for the purpose of a symbol.

* Acts viii. 14—16. † Acts. x. 44—47.

‡ Lev. xv. 5, 8, 11, 13, 21, 22, 27 ; xvi. 26, 28 ; xvii. 15 ; Numb. xix. 7, 8, 19.

"We are led to conceive of Baptism, as the pouring out of water from a cup on the turned-up face of the baptized; and whether he be adult or in infancy, it may thus not only wet the surface as a figure of washing, but be drunk into the mouth as the emblem of a principle of new life and of continual support and refreshment, and of a willingness given, or to be given, to the baptized to receive whatever may be assigned him as his portion. We are led to this conception of baptism by various passages of Scripture, which it will be found to illustrate. The cup which I refer to is the *קא*, cup of nature, that is the hollow of the human hand. From this cup the baptizer so pours out water on the baptized, that it shall run down his face, as the ointment did from the head of Aaron, and even to the skirts, rather to the upper border or collar, of his garment.*

"We remarked that *βαπτω* (bap-to) was usually applied to operations on a small scale, and of a gentle nature. The same remark may be made on *βαπτίζω* (bap-tizo), when it is not used in a figurative and exaggerated sense. When applied to the ordinance of Baptism, the word has its usual natural signification. It consists merely in popping a handful of water on the face. This simplicity, and this littleness of the sign, marks its resemblance to all the other symbolical ordinances of God, and distinguishes it from those clumsy and unseemly additions, which a superstitious dependence upon means, or rather on the show of wisdom in will-worship, has rendered men so prone to adopt. I have as little faith in the compromise of *copious* pouring, as in the enormity of *immersion* Baptism. A small quantity of blood sprinkled once a year, by the high priest with one of his fingers, on a little gold plated seat, was, for ages, the sign to Israel of the acceptance in heaven of the sacrifice of Christ for the whole church. A small morsel of bread, and a sip of wine, shall, to the end of the world, remind Christians of the Saviour's body broken, and of his blood shed, for them, and shall, by being eaten and drunk, by his people, at his table, show the Lord's death until he come. In exact

* Ps. cxxxiii. 2.

accordance with these divine institutions, the handful of water on the face of the polluted sinner, confirms the good news of the washing of regeneration, even the renewing of the Holy Ghost.

“From the above attempt at illustrating βαπτίζω, we may see one reason why it has not been often successfully translated. The translators have generally rendered it *wash*, or *immerse*. But if the view which we have taken of the subject be at all correct, the idea of *washing* is inadequate, and that of *immersion* erroneous.

“In reply to the remark that baptism is an application of the element from above, we are commonly reminded of those phrases in Scripture, which speak of baptizers and baptized as going down to the water, and coming up from it, or, as some render them, going down into the water, and coming up out of it. To this objection the obvious answer is, that as all waters are to be found in hollow places,—in wells, in pools, in rivers, which run in valleys among the hills, or within their banks through the plain,—such phrases as have been mentioned must be used in all cases in which men have occasion to approach them, for any purpose whatever. The mere circumstances, then, of going down to water, and coming up again from it, cannot inform us what was done at the water. In Gen. xxiv. 16, we are told, Rebekah ‘went down to the well’—‘and came up.’ Does this imply that she immersed herself? No. ‘She went down to the well, and filled her pitcher, and came up.’ In Judges vii. 5, Gideon ‘brought down the people unto the water.’ Was it to immerse them? No: it was to give them an opportunity of drinking.

“The phrases which describe baptism as an application of the element from above, immediately relate to the ACT of baptizing; whereas the phrases now mentioned relate merely to the PLACE where that act was performed. If this fact be duly considered, it will enable us to determine which of the two classes of phraseology is to be applied for deciding the question before us. Let it be supposed, that the baptizer led the person to be baptized, not only to the water, but

into it; the question returns, What did he do with him there? I answer, that all the language of Scripture which relates to the ACT of baptizing, informs me that he took a handful of the water, and *poured it out* on his turned-up face. This was the act of baptizing. Going *to* the water and *from* the water, or if you please *into* the water and *out* of the water, was not the act of baptizing.

“If the *act* of baptizing had consisted of immersing the subject in water, there would surely have been some allusion to the lowering of his body in that supine direction, which is, I believe, commonly observed, for the purpose of bringing it under the surface. But there is nothing of this sort to be found in all the Scriptures.

“‘And it came to pass in those days,’ says Mark, ‘that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee to Jordan (to the country on the banks of Jordan), and was baptized by John. And ‘immediately on coming from the water,’ &c. So I think the passage ought to be pointed and translated, although the arrangement of the clauses is not of the smallest importance to the present argument. The expression is equivalent in Matt. iii. 13; ‘Then cometh Jesus from the Galilee UPON the Jordan (from the country of Galilee, to the country of Jordan), to John, to be baptized of him.’

“I have no doubt that John the Baptist usually preached in ‘the country about Jordan,’* as Christ afterward did for a time in the country about the Lake of Tiberias. I believe that John frequented the banks of the Jordan as the most convenient place of the wilderness, not only for multitudes to attend him, but also for having water at hand with which to baptize them. But the whole language of Scripture on this subject relates to the *place* where he administered the ordinance, and not to the *act*, nor to the *mode*, of his administration. Notwithstanding, our translators say, ‘Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway OUT of the water.’† I suppose that no man upon earth who can read ἀνέβη ἐξ ὕδατος ἀπὸ τοῦ ὕδατος, imagines it to be any thing else than ‘he went up straightway FROM the water.’ Now it surely will

* Luke iii. 3.

† Matt. iii. 16.

not be said that Philip had any occasion to go further with the Ethiopian nobleman than John did with our Saviour, in order to the administration of baptism. It is reasonable, then, to understand the *εις* and the *εκ* of Acts viii. 38, 39, as signifying precisely what is indicated by the *απεδ* of Matt. iii. 16. I am far from saying that *εις* does not often signify *into*, and *εκ* *out of*. But I say they do not possess these meanings necessarily or universally, and particularly, for the reason given above, they do not possess them in Acts viii. 38, 39.

“The great, and, as it appears to me, the only original reason why baptism has been thought to imply immersion, is the expression which occurs in Rom. vi. 4, and Col. ii. 12; in the first of which the Apostle Paul says, ‘therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death;’ and in the second, ‘buried with him in baptism.’ In both passages the expression seems to be of the same import.

“He appeals to the meaning of our baptism, which, being the first ordinance observed among converts in the original propagation of the gospel, may be justly considered as exhibiting the first principles of the oracles of God, and the first elements of Christian character. ‘Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?’ He then infers, that since baptism has so immediate a reference to the death of Christ, it must by consequence be connected also with his resurrection; and that as, in the former view, it teaches the regenerate the abandoning of the old life of sin, so, in the latter, it equally teaches them the habitual, increasing, and permanent pursuit and progress of the new life of righteousness. ‘Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.’

“A particular emphasis is here laid on our ‘being buried with Christ by baptism into death.’ The expression contains an allusion to our Lord’s burial, and our being buried with him by baptism into his death. This allusion must have been well understood at first, for it is here made as an illustration. From various causes, however, it now requires

illustration itself. This we shall endeavour to supply, in the hope that we may, by means of it, not only understand the apostle's language, but, through the blessing of God, feel, and be led more and more to exemplify, the force of his reasoning.

"It is a common remark, that the apostle is treating, in this passage, not of the form of baptism, but of its object, its design, and its actual effects. On this account, many are of opinion that no inference can be drawn from his language concerning the form of baptism at all. Perhaps it would be more correct to say, that he is here treating of the connexion between the justification and the sanctification of Christians; and that, in doing so, he makes three distinct allusions to Baptism, to Grafting, and to Crucifixion. In each of these, therefore, there must be points of resemblance, for all the allusions of Scripture are admirably correct; and wherever we meet with any which seem to be exceptions from this character, we have much reason to suspect that the difficulty is owing to our own inattention and ignorance.

"That this has been remarkably the case with the allusion to baptism in the passage before us, will perhaps appear in the sequel. To many it presents no difficulty. They have been accustomed to think baptism and immersion to be synonymous terms. They conceive the expression, 'buried with him in baptism,' to arise from the resemblance between the interment of a dead body and its subsequent resurrection from beneath the ground, and the covering of a baptized person entirely with water and the raising of him up again from beneath its surface. To others it has seemed very extraordinary, that a word which in every other part of Scripture implies the act of *pouring out from above*, should in this single expression have its meaning reversed, and be supposed to refer to an act of *immersing in water below*.

"It is our happiness to know, that our blessed Saviour never was finally interred. 'He died,' however, 'for our sins according to the Scriptures, and he was buried, and he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.'*

* 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4.

“How, then, was he laid in a sepulchre? His body was not lowered into a grave, and covered with earth. It was not laid under ground, but carried into a tomb hewn out of a rock, not a sunk tomb. The body of Christ, therefore, was not lowered, and rose up, but was carried in, and came forth; and what is said in Scripture of his burial can have no reference to final interment, but exclusively to preparatory rites.

“Let us consider, thirdly, the union with Christ in his burial, which is signified by our baptism. In our baptism, we receive the figure of the washing of the body with pure water. This sacred office, we have seen, was performed to the dead body of Christ, when his disciples anointed it, that it might not see corruption. The performance of it was an evidence of his death, an emblem of separation from the pollutions of this world, and a pledge of the abolishing of death, and the bringing to light of life and incorruption. The union of believers with Christ, then, which is signified by baptism, is regeneration. Baptism is not, as some maintain, regeneration itself, but it is a figure of it; and the figure teaches the necessity of the reality.

“This view of the meaning of our baptism is confirmed by Col. ii. 11—13, where baptism is declared to be circumcision. ‘The circumcision made without hands,’ is an expression which shews that the apostle did not mean that baptism was itself the spiritual blessing represented by the old circumcision, for baptism is performed by hands as well as the old circumcision was. He meant that the one ordinance succeeded the other, because both had the same meaning. Whether it were by manual circumcision of old, or manual baptism now, the spiritual blessing signified is the product of divine agency, namely, regeneration.

“In the beginning of the 6th chapter of Romans, the apostle makes three distinct allusions, to Baptism, to Grafting, and to Crucifixion. It is the opinion of some, however, that in the second of these allusions he is still adverting to the ordinance of Baptism; and so full of the idea of immersion do they become on reading this passage (on the 5th verse),

that, besides supposing it to be intended in the foregoing verse, where it is said, 'We are buried with Christ by baptism,' they imagine that the apostle is repeating it in the 5th verse, 'for if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.' 'The burying of Christ (says Dr. Macknight) and of believers, first in the water of baptism, and afterwards in the earth, is fitly enough compared to the planting of seeds in the earth, because the effect, in both cases, is a reviviscence to a state of greater perfection.' We have already seen what an erroneous view is here given of both the baptism and burial of Christ; we now remark, that a view equally erroneous is here given of planting. This operation does not consist in the depositing 'seeds' under the ground; plants are not seeds, but productions from seeds. Planting and sowing are performed in a different manner. Seeds are usually, when sown, covered with the surface: plants are set, either in the surface of the ground by partial insertion, or in some stock of another plant, above the surface, by grafting. Sowing is the means used for a plant's original growth; planting is its removal, its transplantation, into a new situation.

"The transplanting of the disciples of Christ, in consequence of their union with him, is their dying to sin, and living to righteousness, with all that victory over the world at present, and all that final glory, which attends the happy change; they are grafted, or transplanted, together with him in the likeness of his death, and they shall be in the likeness of his resurrection.

"As in baptism there is a representation of death to sin, by a figure of washing, like that preparatory to interment, which took place in the burial of Christ; as in grafting, or transplantation, we have a figure of that change of state and character, by which we have all connexion broken off with the circumstances of our former condition, that we may be one with Christ; so in crucifixion, our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin may be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

“My worthy Christian friends of the Antipædobaptist persuasion must not suppose that I charge them with any want of a sense of propriety or delicacy, in the animadversions which I feel it my duty to make on their method of baptizing. I give them full credit for acting according to their conscience in that matter; and I am well aware, that when a man is brought to think that he is serving God, it is impossible he should, for a moment, admit the thought that the service is not every thing that is solemn and lovely. Had I the most distant suspicion that the subject I am treating of received any countenance from the Word of God, I should deem it a bounden duty to view it with respect; and, if I did not feel confident in recommending it, I would, at any rate, acknowledge the prudence of abstaining from giving it an avowed opposition. But having stated reasons which convince me that it is not taught in Scripture, and that the contrary opinion is productive of much evil, I feel it incumbent on me to enforce my conviction on others, by every consideration which the examination of the Scriptures on the subject has suggested to my own mind. And I beg leave to say, that I know not how I could otherwise cherish love to the Lord Jesus Christ, or to my brethren in him of all persuasions.

“The immersion of one person by another, except in cases of necessity or mercy, seems to be contrary to decency, and to the respect which we owe to one another. In the 15th, 16th, and 17th chapters of Leviticus, and in the 19th of Numbers, we meet with several cases in which the flesh was to be bathed in water. But in all these the person was not only to bathe himself, but to retire for the purpose. And there is no instance in all the law of Moses, or in all the ordinances of Christianity, of one person being directed to perform an act of religious worship by bathing another; far less is there an instance of a public bathing in a worshipping assembly; an immersion before the church and before the world. Nay, I know not if any thing like this is to be found among all the corruptions and enormities of an idol’s temple.

“In Scripture history, the act of baptism is always con-

sidered as immediately possible, as soon as water can, in any quantity, great or small, be procured. Is this the case with the act of immersion? Is baptism a debt which the immersion baptist can pay to the believer on demand? Must he not first go to a river, or procure a bath, and prepare changes of raiment? It is not enough for his purpose to say, 'See, here is water.' It must be ascertained that the water is sufficiently deep and abundant to plunge; sufficiently shallow and gentle to plunge with safety.

"No man can be more favourable than I am to cold bathing. It is a bracer and a luxury. No great hardship could be experienced, in any climate, were the practice enjoined every day. And surely that would be a very extraordinary constitution, which could not, at any age, 'well endure' to be plunged once in one's life. But an attendant on bathers, a person whose work is to wade in with them, to plunge them—and lead them out again—has a task which, I conceive, is not quite so pleasant. It must be very severe labour, and very trying to health. The warmer the country, so much the worse; the pores being more open, every change of temperature is more sensibly felt. What must have been the condition of John the Baptist, had his office consisted in preaching, and wading into the river, and plunging others, and splashing himself, &c. &c.?"

"Poor 'Johannes de Dooper,' John the Dipper, as the Dutch Bible calls him, if such was the nature of his ministry, what an amphibious life must he have lived! he could be little out of the water from morning to night, as long as his public ministry lasted. His legs and arms at least, whatever more of him, must have been soon excoriated by the friction of his soaking 'camel's hair' garment. 'The leathern girdle about his loins' must have become good for nothing before the end of the first day. After so particular an account of his dress, is it not singular that nothing was said of it, if he had also a baptizing dress.

"I am told, that John baptized those multitudes in Jordan. But I am not told, and I do not believe, that, in doing this, his feet were dipped in the brim of the water. He says

nothing of the stream, of its depth, its rapidity, &c. The only notice he takes of the element he used, is to direct our attention to the greater than himself, whose baptism is the reality, of which baptism with water is only the figure.

“When I read, John iii. 22, 23, that, after Jesus and his disciples came into Judea, and there tarried and baptized, ‘John also was baptizing in Ænon, near to Salem, because there were many waters there;’ I see nothing concerning immersion, but a plain reason why two large companies should have been attracted to the neighbourhood of each other, where they might act without interference, while separately engaged in making the same religious use of water. ‘There were many waters there,’ is an expression which appears to me to refer, not to Ænon only, but also to the land of Judah, probably the banks of the Jordan, where Christ and his disciples were baptizing. ‘John ALSO was baptizing in Ænon, &c., because there were many waters there’—many springs in all that part of the country.

“No doubt the disciples of Christ baptized the believing people of Sychar. Did they immerse them? If they did, there must have been such a drawing of water from Jacob’s well as had not been known from the days in which Jacob drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle. In very many other places, the difficulty would have been far greater; and such indeed is the general scarcity of water in the Holy Land, as to render the practice of immersion, so often as baptism would have required in the days of Christ and his apostles, altogether incredible.

“When I read the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, I receive no conviction that Peter sent away so much as one individual, drenched and dripping, to his own house. Some mocked when they heard the disciples speaking with tongues. What would they have said had they beheld the scene closing with the immersion of three thousand people in water? Here, again, the scarcity of water makes the idea of immersion incredible. All the pools in Jerusalem united would have been quite inadequate.

“When I read, Acts viii. 12, that in the city of Samaria

the inhabitants with one accord gave heed to those things which Philip spake, and when they believed 'were baptized, both men and women,' I have the strongest conviction that in this ordinance there was no immersion. Who can suppose that the comely and holy propagation of the gospel of Christ was attended by public, and simultaneous, and promiscuous immersion of both sexes? That men, who were strangers, should lay hold of women, and, without distinction of age or condition in life, should immerse them in water, and raise them out of it, holding them in their hands, and exposing them in this dismal state to the eyes of the other sex, and to the gaze of the multitude, is to me utterly inconceivable.

"When I read, Acts x. 47, that Peter said, 'Can any man forbid water,' &c., I believe he proposed that water should be brought in for effusion, to the room or place where the company were assembled; not that they should be carried for immersion to a bath, a pool, or a river.

I have precisely the same persuasion when I read, Acts xx. 16, that Ananias said to Paul, 'And now, why tarriest thou?' &c. And when it is said, in the parallel passage, Acts ix. 18, 19, 'And immediately there fell,' &c. In these passages there is neither going down to the water, nor coming up from the water; nor are such expressions ever used when baptism is said to have been administered within doors. It is also observable, that, after a fast of three days, Paul was baptized before he had received either meat or strength. Would this have been done had his baptism been immersion?

"When Lydia was baptized and her house,* I no more believe that she and her family were immersed in the river, where Paul and Silas went out to preach, than that the jailer and his family were immersed by Paul and Silas while yet in the prison; because, although the jailer, at the first alarm, is said to have 'brought them out,'† it was evidently *out from the inner* prison, into which (verse 24) he had thrust them.

* Acts xvi. 15.

† Acts xvi. 30.

"I by no means think it incredible that there should have been a bath in the jailer's house at Philippi (as some of our Antipædobaptist brethren allege we do); but there is not a hint in all the Bible about the use of a bath for the purpose of baptizing, more than about the use of a bason. Water was brought (I know not in what vessel) to wash their stripes, and water was brought to baptize the family. Every house-baptism supposes water to be brought, and the baptized to receive the effusion on his face from the hand of the baptizer.

"Nothing can be more direct and obvious than the argument from Scripture for infant baptism. It rests on the simple principle that the history of the Acts of the Apostles is of the same authority with that of the four Gospels.

"As" the court "is probably aware, I refer to the well known fact, that according to the history of the Acts of the Apostles, baptism was administered to believers and their houses. The first case of family baptism is that of Cornelius; the second, that of Lydia and her family; the third, that of the jailer and his family; the fourth is that of the family of Stephanas. Of the probability of more cases being expressly mentioned in Scripture, I shall say, as Paul does of the numbers he baptized at Corinth, 'Besides I know not whether there be any other.'

"In the account given of the cases mentioned above, it is evident that the administration of baptism to families was nothing new. They were not singular cases, or rare cases, or cases to be accounted for and justified by any peculiarity of circumstances, such as had not happened before, and might not soon happen again.

"Although, therefore, it is in the Acts of the Apostles that family baptism is first mentioned, it was not for the first time then practised. There is but 'one baptism'* in the church of God; and from first to last, in Scripture history, there is no reason to doubt that it was administered in one way. On these grounds we are supported in holding that family baptism was practised from the beginning. There

* Eph. iv. 5.

were always children in attendance during our Saviour's ministry. See Matt. xviii. 2—6. In Matt. iii. 5, 6, it is said, 'Then went out to him Jerusalem,' &c. This account most naturally admits the supposition that the inhabitants of those places came usually at least with their families.

"We have to add, that there is ample room for supposing family baptism to be included in the comprehensive terms of our Saviour's final commission, Matt. xxviii. 18—20. The language of the Acts of the Apostles is always equally comprehensive with that of the Gospels.* Now the promise was made to families—to parents and children, to children under age, and to superannuated old men; to the bond as well as the free; and to both sexes alike.

"In Gal. iii. 26—29, it is said, 'For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free,' &c. 'for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs *according to the promise.*'

"If family baptism had not been practised, from the beginning to the end of New Testament history, some case, I ought rather to say, many cases, would certainly have occurred, in which the children of believers, coming to embrace the faith of their parents, would have been said to have been baptized. But there is no case of this kind in the history of Scripture; nor the most distant intimation that Baptism was ever deferred till adult age.

"I shall now be asked, if all or any of the families of believers where family baptism is said to have been practised can be proved to have contained infants? I answer, that a 'house,' or family, is a term which includes in its meaning infants, as properly as adult children; and that in not one of those families mentioned in connexion with baptism is any exception made, for the purposes of excluding infants.

"That there is nothing in the idea of being 'baptized' which

* Acts ii. 38, 39.

should exclude infants, is evident from what Paul says of the children of Israel on their leaving Egypt, when we know they had all their infants with them.*

“When Lydia was baptized with her house, we are made certain that they were none of them believers excepting herself. For she urged Christian character as the argument for prevailing with Paul and Silas to accept her hospitality. ‘If ye have judged ME to be faithful to the Lord, come into MY house, and abide.’†

“‘The house of Stephanas—addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints.’‡ Was this a proof that they had among them no infants.

“I am now prepared to request the attention” of the court “to Col. ii. 11, 12. The apostle is here addressing believers. He says, that being buried with Christ, by the washing of baptism, they are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands. His meaning is, that as they were blessed with regeneration, which was the blessing signified by their baptism, they stood in no need of circumcision, since regeneration is the circumcision made without hands, that is, the circumcision of the heart, so often spoken of in the Old and New Testament. Now this reasoning is inconclusive, and the very language in which it is expressed is unintelligible, not only unless the ordinance of baptism under the reign of Christ, and the ordinance of circumcision which was observed before his coming (both equally done with hands), signify the same thing, but unless the one has come in the room of the other. This, therefore, I hold to be the doctrine of the apostle Paul, and according to this doctrine I am not merely warranted, and in duty bound, to baptize a believer’s family, however young, but I am directed to maintain, that except at the original entrance of the gospel into a family, as when circumcision was first instituted, the proper, ordinary, and regular administration of baptism is to a believer’s infant offspring.

“As at the first propagation of the gospel in the world, so at its first propagation in any new sphere of evangelical

* 1 Cor. x. 1, 2.

† Acts xvi. 15.

‡ 1 Cor. xvi. 15.

missionary labour, there will always be several cases of adult baptism. But this is not the ordinary scriptural state of the administration of this ordinance; and he who refuses to baptize the infant offspring of a believer, and, instead of doing this, encourages the believer himself to renounce his baptism, and to submit to the human device of immersion, at the same time excluding his infants, not only withholds the privilege due to the individual parent, and the token of God's love to the children for their parents' sake, but he presumes (as appears to me) to sit in judgment on a whole lineage, the history of which, except for a very limited period, must be utterly unknown to him; as if God had never till now established his covenant with any one of that family, and even now did not intend to perform to the believing parent the unabridged promise, 'I will be a God to thee, and to thy seed after thee.' Unless we meet with a believer, we have no warrant to dispense any ordinance; but when we do meet with a believer, it is not for us to disown a former observance of the ordinance which God appointed, or to refuse to do to his family as the apostles and evangelists did to the families of the primitive Christians.

"In thirty years' ministry, it has happened to me to baptize three adults, while I have usually baptized between twenty and thirty infants every year. I conceive this to be quite a sufficient proportion of adult baptism to that of infants, in the ministry of one in my situation. Nor do I imagine that a pastor can expect more pleasure in the one kind of baptism than in the other. If there be any difference, I suppose it will be found, that (except missionary labours) occasions for adult baptism, however interesting they may sometimes be in themselves, generally arise out of circumstances to be remembered with regret. But there is unmixed joy at the baptism of an infant. We rejoice in the addition which the Lord hath graciously made to the believer's family, and in the permission that it should be figuratively washed from sin in the name of the Lord, whose power and grace are sufficient to save in every case in which we see sin reigning unto death.

“ We are apt to be led into a mistake respecting the case of infants, from misunderstanding the expression, ‘ He that believeth shall be saved.’ This expression is connected with the preaching of the gospel, and relates to those who are of age to hear it: but there are many who could never be saved, were this the only way of salvation. He who made Adam upright, could have made him so in infancy as well as in maturity. He who makes a man be born from above, can give him the washing of regeneration for Christ’s sake at an equally early period. While we hearers of the gospel are saved by faith in Christ, the renewing of the mind, which brought us to the belief of the truth, is perfectly distinct from that belief; and while the Holy Spirit glorifies the Saviour in the case of saved hearers, by accompanying the preaching of the gospel with a quickening, a converting influence, he equally glorifies him in the case of saved infants, by anticipating, not only in the order of nature, but in the order of time also, the physical power of hearing the gospel. Many whose lives are taken early away are brought at once into the presence of the Lord, and of the exalted Saviour who redeemed them. ‘ He came to save that which was lost.’ Infants were among the lost, and infants, as well as others, Christ came to save.

“ My Antipædobaptist brethren tell me they ‘ cannot understand the propriety of looking into the book of Genesis for direction as to a New Testament ordinance.’ I shall not ask them to admit any arguments even from the Abrahamic covenant and the rite of circumcision, unless in as far as it shall appear from the New Testament that they apply, ‘ not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers.’* ”

“ Paul, in Gal. iii. 17, expressly calls the Abrahamic covenant ‘ the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ;’ and in Rom. iv. 11, 12, 13, draws our attention to what circumcision was, not to Abraham’s carnal posterity, but, in the first instance, to what it was to himself, and then, to what it made him to be to his spiritual posterity, whether Jews or Gentiles.

* John vii. 22.

“The first intimation of the covenant which was confirmed of God in Christ, was contained in the curse pronounced on the serpent. It was certainly from the belief of it, that Abel offered his most excellent sacrifice, and that Enoch walked with God. At last, mention is expressly made of this covenant, when God announces to Noah his determination to bring upon the world the waters of the flood.* BUT WITH THEE WILL I ESTABLISH MY COVENANT. Observe, first, the Lord speaks of his covenant as already known; observe, again, that Noah was the only person in his family, as well as in the world, who is said to have been a real servant of the Lord.† Observe still further, that although Noah (like Lydia) was the only believer in his family, yet the whole family (its connexion by affinity as well as by descent) were included in the sign, ‘with thee will I establish my covenant, and thou shalt come into the ark, thou and thy sons, &c. with thee.’ Observe, finally, that the including of Noah’s family in the sign of the covenant which God established with him, was no vain thing to his family; it not only preserved their natural lives, but the long-suffering of the Lord towards them, in this instance, issued in salvation to some of them, and to some of their posterity in all future ages.

“It is perfectly fair in our Antipædobaptist brethren to ask, what connexion all this has with the faith of the gospel, and what with the New Testament ordinance of baptism. Let the apostles Paul and Peter be heard in reply—let them read Heb. xi. 7, and 1 Peter iii. 18—22. ‘THE LIKE FIGURE WHEREUNTO, EVEN BAPTISM, DOTH ALSO NOW SAVE US. (And what answereth to this, even baptism, now saveth us also,) not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.’ Peter’s language implies, that being saved by water in the ark was a figure, and expresses that being saved by baptism is a *corresponding figure*; and that we may not mistake the point of resemblance to which he refers, he observes of the ark, that in it a ‘few, that is eight (*that is the whole family*) souls were saved by water.’ When,

* Gen. vi. 17, 18.

† Gen. vi. 8, 9.

therefore, we say that baptism is come in the room of circumcision, we say nothing more than Peter has said of its coming in the room of a prior ordinance of precisely the same nature ; and we are justified in the inference which we draw from the words of Paul respecting believers in Christ, that, ‘ being buried with Christ in baptism, they are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands.’

“When we compare the ordinance of baptism with that of circumcision, we are led to the very same observations which we were led to when we compared it with that of going into the ark.* The covenant is the same as that which was established with Noah ; there is, as before, a particular establishment of it with Abraham ; it contains the promises of the resurrection and heavenly felicity, before the subordinate and temporal promise of the land of Canaan ; it is also accompanied with an appropriate ordinance of confirmation ; this ordinance is to be administered to the full extent of the family ; and as God had given to Abraham not only children, but bondmen and bondwomen, the administration is expressly extended to them. This covenant includes the promise of Canaan to Abraham’s children in the line of Isaac, but it is evidently in itself the ‘ covenant confirmed of God in Christ.’

“It appears from Gen. xvii. 7—14, before quoted, that the seed of Abraham, while they were infants, and no more than eight days old, were in covenant with God. He was their God, and promised to give them a portion in the resurrection, and in the city of the heavenly Jerusalem. It is expressly said, ver. 11, that their circumcision was a token of the covenant between God and them. There is not the least hint given that circumcision was a token of both these promises to the adult, and only the promise of Canaan to infants. As Abraham’s posterity were, by the virtue of this covenant, to have the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession, provided they did not break covenant with God, and apostatize from him (for if they did he would banish them from thence, as at this day), so circumcised infants should cer-

* See Gen. xvii. 7—14.

tainly, by virtue of this covenant, have the Almighty for their God, and so be brought to heaven, provided they did not afterwards apostatize from God's covenant. And forasmuch as they were not capable of this apostacy as long as they remained infants, it is certain that if they died in their infancy, they should be partakers of that blessed resurrection, and of all that eternal happiness of the future world.

"Baptism now, like circumcision of old, makes persons to become the seed of Abraham, and heirs to the promises. This it does to the utmost extent of its administration. Now we have seen that it was administered to believers, and their houses. Evidently referring to this enlarged and comprehensive administration, the apostle says, 'For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ,' &c.*

"Nay, without baptism as the sign of the covenant of God, we are taught that no one can enter into the kingdom, or enjoy the salvation of God. It corresponds in this respect with what is said, Gen. xvii. 14, of circumcision of old. We mean not to assert that baptism is absolutely indispensable to salvation. But certainly there is a meaning not to be despised in the two following passages, in which the ordinance, as well as the blessing it confirms, is expressly mentioned. 'Except a man (any one) be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.'† 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be condemned.'‡ From this text, some infer that a person must actually believe, else he cannot be baptized. With as much reason they might infer, that a person must actually believe, else he cannot be saved, especially as it is added, 'he that believeth not shall be condemned.' But it is acknowledged that infants shall not be condemned because they do not believe. No objections can therefore be brought from the texts against the baptism of infants.

"We may now understand the reason of the Scripture fact, that the apostles and evangelists baptized believers and their houses. They considered baptism as Christian circumcision; and therefore, in observing the ordinance, they

* Gal. iii. 26—29.

† John iii. 5.

‡ Mark xvi. 16.

observed the ancient extent of the administration. It is particularly worthy of remark, that, according to the apostolic epistles, the persons addressed or referred to as belonging to the first churches of Christ, were precisely of the classes said to have been circumcised in the family of Abraham. They were parents, and children, and servants, that is, slaves born in the house, or bought with money.* As all these classes were circumcised under the Old Testament, they were, and therefore are to be still, baptized under the New Testament.

“We may now understand also the benefit connected with this extensive administration of baptism. It is this, that in the house of the believer ‘a remnant shall be saved.’ This exceeding great and precious promise, of which family baptism is a sign, is not limited to one generation, but abides with the family in every successive descent, as long as it shall exist upon earth.

“Many more points might be touched upon, all of which would contribute to throw light on the meaning of Scripture, to confirm our faith, and to fulfil our joy. The subject seems, indeed, to resolve itself at last into this question, whether we shall maintain or deny the unity of the work of God under different dispensations; the harmony of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. But I have no desire to extend my remarks; I bless God that I have been permitted” to give my evidence before this Court. “I am always glad when I can, consistently with faithfulness, avoid controversy; but I have been called upon by circumstances, to lay my sentiments, on what I conceive to be a much perverted subject, before” this Court, “and before the world.

“My dear and respected Antipædobaptist brethren (for I trust you will still permit me so to call you), I have used great freedom with your distinguishing sentiments. ‘Wherefore? because I love you not? God knoweth.’ I certainly think your baptism to be the human improvement of a superstitious age, and to partake of all the monstrosity in its form, and all the cruelty of unwarrantable exclusion in its

* See Eph. vi. 1—9; Col. iii. 20—25; iv. 1; 1 Tim. vi. 1, 2; Titus ii. 1, 10; 1 Peter ii. 18—25; iii. 1—12.

diminished administration, which might be expected from such an origin; when a society, or when individuals, are led to renounce the baptism of the Holy Scriptures, and to repeat the ordinance under a form of their own; when they refuse the pledge of God's special regard for the posterity of his people, and banish from their families an ordinance which expressly includes them, without any exception. I am sometimes told that such persons, and such only, are baptized Christians. This is language, my friends, to which I give place by subjection, no, not for an hour. Your principles and your practice, and somewhat also of your manner of speaking with regard to the ordinance of baptism, are quite opposite, as you have already seen, to every view which I have been able to take of the meaning of the Holy Scriptures.

"I regard many of you as saints, and faithful in Christ Jesus. Your Antipædobaptism is to me a cause of no small regret. But for yourselves I entertain sincere affection and esteem, which I trust may last, till, in time, or in eternity, we shall be favoured of God with unlimited agreement.

"To enquirers I beg leave to offer one advice; Take a little time to your enquiry." You that have heard the evidence, "must have observed that in every view of the question the field of discussion is pretty extensive. I do not think that the subject is in itself difficult, but it admits of numerous illustrations; and the controversy which has arisen from it has been made difficult, partly by early superstition, and partly by modern ingenuity and zeal. I have been sometimes accused of endeavouring to perplex and to confound enquirers. If I ever do, it must be very wrong.

"I hope" I am addressing many here "whose faith is established on the subject of this my" evidence. "Christian parents, give thanks to God for the baptism of your families. Christian children, give thanks for the baptism of your infancy. Christian pastors, remember with daily solicitude the little ones you have baptized. Forget them not in dispensing the Lord's Supper, that ordinance which is not dispensed to a believer and his house. Tell them the meaning of that service, and invite them, by the symbols of his love, to taste

and see that the Lord is good. Warn them of the consequence of neglecting the great salvation.

“Let no man trust in the observance of ordinances for the salvation of his own soul, or of the souls of others. Many desire to have their children baptized, that they may not be reproached as Pagans, who show no desire that either themselves or their children should obtain mercy of the Lord, or live in his fear and service. We entreat such to consider that the doctrine of Scripture is, ‘Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thine house.’ Many also are disposed to think themselves Christians, because they were baptized in their infancy, and have received what is commonly called a Christian education. Had you received the love of the truth that you might be saved, and were you now cleaving with purpose of heart to the Lord, we should rejoice in your baptism as verified to you in your actual enjoyment of spiritual blessings. But if you imagine that any ordinance can operate as a charm, and be relied on as a ground of hope to the exclusion of the Saviour, you are altogether strangers to the very meaning of Christianity. Children, taught of God, shall never suffer for the sins of their parents; and therefore their comfort need not depend on the motives from which their baptism was originally dispensed. On the other hand, unless the children, even of believing parents, shall come, in the event of their arriving at years capable of it, to embrace the faith of Christ themselves, they have no privilege of their own; for in no case can men become sons of God from carnal descent. If, like Ishmael, they rise to mock or persecute those that are born after the Spirit, or be profane persons, as Esau, who, for one morsel of meat, sold his birth-right, they must be cast out of the family of Abraham and of God. The privilege of the parents, in having had them baptized in their infancy, cannot in this case be of any service to them. What is said of circumcision and the law, may be justly applied to baptism and the gospel. ‘Circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law: but if thou be a breaker of the law, circumcision is made uncircumcision.’*

* Rom. ii. 25.

EIGHTH WITNESS.

I, the EIGHTH WITNESS, have been deputed by eleven of my brethren, to come forward in the great cause now pending before this Court. I wish it clearly to be understood that they have authorized me to declare, that the evidence I am about to give will be in unison with their opinions, and that they are willing to be considered as speaking through me. In sending me before you, they were pleased to observe, that they are satisfied that I shall make "a direct appeal to divine revelation and authentic history;" that my statements will be "fair and accurate;" my "criticisms learned and solid;" my "reasonings, manly and conclusive;" and that, throughout my evidence, I shall "display the spirit and manners of the gentleman and the Christian;" and it pleased them to flatter me by saying, that their chief motive in sending me here was, that my testimony might be circulated to the extent that they were confident its merits would deserve. This premised, I shall proceed.

"From the exactest observations, it appears, that of those who are born into the world, scarce a third part attain to the age even of *one* year. Thousands of infants every day languish under grievous distempers; are tortured, convulsed, and in piteous agonies give up the ghost. This at first seems a very strange dispensation; hardly reconcilable with the wisdom and justice, much less with the goodness and mercy, of God!—It is scarce possible not to ask—How comes it to pass that millions of harmless babes, in whose frame is displayed such infinite skill, who are formed with capacities of such exalted attainments, both intellectual and moral; with capacities of a happiness ever-growing and everlasting, in the knowledge, imitation, and enjoyment of God;—how comes it to pass that they only thus glance

upon the coasts of life; are just brought into the world with exquisite pains, moan away a few weeks of misery and disease upon it, and then, in terrible convulsions, fall victims to death?—What light has God cast upon this dark scene of his providence? Has he left it quite covered with impenetrable clouds? And, where the interest and comfort of so great a part of his intelligent creation are deeply concerned, has he given no intimations which may be a solid ground of hope? It can never be supposed.

“There are *four dispensations* under which religion has principally subsisted since the fall, viz., the dispensation of the *light of nature*, the *Abrahamic*, the *Mosaic*, and the *Christian*. Now each of these casts some light upon this awful scene, and administers some hope as to suffering and dying infants. Let it then be enquired—

“First, What judgment doth reason, or the LIGHT OF NATURE, pass upon their case? There are but two ways in which reason can account for this procedure of providence, viz., by supposing these suffering infants to have existed in some former state; or that they will exist in some future.

“Platonic philosophy taught, that they existed and misbehaved in a former state of being;” and are punished “for evils done there; and it seems to have been an opinion not uncommon amongst the Jews in the days of our Saviour. Concerning the man ‘that was born blind,’ the disciples therefore ask him, ‘Master, who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?’ But this pre-existence of infants, being a matter of absolute uncertainty, unsupported by any solid or probable grounds, reason derives its principal satisfaction from the supposition of their existence in a state after death. There the Almighty Rewarder can give them pleasures and entertainments abundantly to counterbalance the sufferings of their present state.

“This is what reason, I say, surmises and hopes, but cannot certainly conclude. It wants some revelation, some promise from God, to give stability and vigour to these wavering hopes; and under all the conflicts and pains which he sees his dying child suffer, the pious parent has nothing,

from the light of nature, whereon to trust, but the uncovenanted goodness and mercy of God. Now, were it not, in these circumstances, a most desirable thing that God would give us some revelation or promise concerning our infants? Some covenant to assure us that they are the objects of his favour and peculiar regard; and that as they suffer and die in this world, so they shall be raised again to life and happiness in the other? Was not, I ask, some such covenant, revelation, or promise, concerning our infants, what nature greatly wanted, wished for, and desired?

“There is a very rational and just sense, in which God may be said to *establish his covenant with INFANTS*. For Scripture expressly says,* that he *established his covenant, even with the cattle and the fowl*; solemnly engaging no more to *drown them by a flood*. Is there any thing *strange*, then, or *unreasonable* in God’s establishing his covenant with infants; solemnly engaging to *pour his Spirit and blessing on them*. Or, that the evils they suffer in consequence of Adam’s sin shall be removed, and amply recompensed through the righteousness of Christ? Most surely not at all.

“Secondly. This we see done in the ABRAHAMIC DISPENSATION. For as God’s covenant transactions with Abraham was the foundation, or charter of the church, which in after ages he intended to gather, and to erect amongst men; so he here gives pious parents an express promise and revelation concerning their infants. He promises to be a God to *Abraham and to his seed*; and takes his infants into covenant, together with himself; commanding the token of the covenant to be solemnly affixed to them, as a standing testimony or sign that Jehovah was their God.†

“Now, when the Almighty covenants and promises to be the God of these infants, what does it imply? Undoubtedly something great, viz. that he will be, in a peculiar manner, their guardian and benefactor; and that if they died in their infant state, before any transgression had put them out

* Gen. ix. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13.

† See Gen. xvii. 7—14.

of the covenant, they should certainly be raised to a happiness after death.

“Thirdly. The MOSAIC DISPENSATION; and the further strength which this gives to these rational hopes. Now, here, we see another covenant, besides that of circumcision, into which infants are taken; ‘*Ye stand this day all of you before the Lord your God: your captains, your elders, your little ones, your wives, that thou shouldest enter into covenant with the Lord thy God: that he may establish thee to day for a people unto himself: and that he may be unto thee a God, as he hath sworn unto thy fathers, to Abraham,*’ &c.* Hence then, it is most evident that the Jewish infants, in consequence of their dedication to God, and admission into his covenant, were in a peculiar manner his; his property, and his children, in a sense in which the infants of the idolatrous and uncircumcised *Gentiles* were not. But of these, multitudes, no doubt, died in their infant state. What now might be concluded concerning the case of such? undoubtedly this:—That, as they died in covenant with God, (by which covenant he had engaged to take them for a *people to himself*, to acknowledge them as *his children*, and to be to them a God,) and as no advantage nor happiness was given them in this world, at all answerable to these characters, but they miserably languished, like all other infants, and at last died under the primitive condemnation or judgment, it therefore certainly remained, that they will be raised again and exist in some after state; where a happiness will be given them suitable to these great promises, and where they will be treated as the people and children of God. For else, God would plainly seem to have broken his covenant; and the solemn and grand promise of being a God to such an infant, and of taking it for his child, proves a very mean and insignificant thing.

“These are the hopes which REASON surmises, and which the several dispensations, both of ABRAHAM and of MOSES, strongly confirm. We proceed to observe,

“Fourthly. How they are farther brightened by the DIS-

* Deut. xxix. 10—12.

PENSATION OF JESUS CHRIST. As this was to be the last, and the most perfect display of God's mercy to fallen men; in which the riches of his abounding grace were to be most fully revealed; it can never be imagined to come short, in any points, of the two former dispensations. Did God take the infants of believers into covenant with himself, under Abraham and Moses; and command that, as a standing token of it, the *seal of the covenant* should be solemnly affixed to them; but under Jesus his Son, has he made no such manifestation of his merciful regard to them; admitted them visibly into no covenant; nor appointed any token, that he receives them as his children, and that he will be to them a God? How utterly unlikely, as well as uncomfortable, is the thought. Thanks to his mercy! we can with good assurance say, *that* is not the case!

"No. When infants were once brought to our Saviour, to be made partakers of the blessings of his kingdom, he openly and severally *rebuked* his disciples, and was highly displeased with them, for endeavouring to hinder it. He kindly *took them* (infants) into his arms, and laid his hands upon them, and blessed them: and commanded that little children *should be suffered to come*, *i. e.* be brought, to him and not be forbidden; *declaring that of such is the kingdom of God*,* *i. e.* that these, also, have a place in the kingdom of the Messiah, which was now to be set up; and a right to the blessings which himself, the promised King, was come to bestow.

"At another time, he took a little child *into his arms*, and, shewing it to his disciples, says, *Whosoever shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me*. Now the receiving a child in Christ's name, must mean the considering or treating it as standing in some peculiar relation to Christ; as belonging to Christ; as being a subject of his kingdom, or a part of his flock. That this is what our Lord means by 'receiving in his name,' himself has expressly shewn, by thus explaining it, in this same discourse, because ye belong to Christ:† 'whoso shall give you a cup of water to drink,

* Matt. xix. 14.

† Matt. xviii. 5. Mark ix. 37. Luke ix. 48.

in my name,' because ye belong to Christ, 'verily I say unto you,' &c. Hence, then, it is most evident, that infants may be, yea are to be, received in Christ's name; and that by this we are to understand, *receiving them as* belonging, or standing in some *peculiar relation*, to Christ; but in this peculiar relation to Christ, an infant can no otherwise stand than by being solemnly devoted to him, and admitted into his kingdom and church.

"And, that infants were to be admitted into the kingdom of the Messiah, or into that incorporated society of which he is the head, is quite rational to presume; for as they stood in absolute need of the redemption, or grace, which Messiah the King came to bestow on mankind; and as provision was made by the covenant of God for their actual receiving it; so there was the strongest reason to expect that they would be solemnly acknowledged, and declared to be a part of that society or church which should be thus blessed and saved by him. In other words, that as they were condemned through the first Adam, and treated as sinners, so they should be justified through the second Adam, and treated as righteous. But, if they were to be treated as righteous, and to be solemnly declared a part of that society, or church, whom Christ came to save, they were then to be baptized, for baptism was the ceremony in which all, who by God's covenant had a right to salvation, were to be admitted into the church, and solemnly declared to be of the number of the saved.

"That, in the eye of the Christian law, infants are actually under a sentence of condemnation, and considered as sinners, by being made to suffer death, the punishment and effect of sin, cannot be denied. 'By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all, for that' all are treated as if they 'had sinned.'*

"(Iniquity and sin are very frequently used in Scripture, where not any real guilt or moral turpitude is meant, but only the effects or punishment of sin.† And this suggests an easy,

* Rom. v. 12. † See Gen. xix. 15; 1 Sam. xxviii. 10; 2 Kings, vii. 9; Isaiah, liii. 6, 11, 12; 1 Peter, ii. 24; 2 Cor. v. 21; Heb. ix. 28.

and doubtless the *true* sense of that much controverted text, 'I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me,'* alluding to the *bitter sorrows* in which, in consequence of the first sin,† the woman is sentenced to conceive and bring forth.) 'By one man's offence judgment came upon all men to condemnation.' 'By one man's offence many were made sinners.' 'In Adam all die.'‡ Though infants are incapable of *any moral* or *proper* guilt, yet as in the wise scheme of God's providence they are at present subjected to innumerable pains, diseases, and death, the penal effects of sin, through the disobedience of Adam; they are, agreeably to the style of Scripture, said to *have sinned*, and *to be made*, i. e. treated as sinners.

"Now, the same discourse of the apostle, which represents them as condemned and suffering through Adam, represents them also as justified and saved by Jesus Christ. For 'as by the offence of one (Adam) judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one (Christ) the free gift came upon all men to justification of life: for as by the disobedience of one many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.'§ As much as to say, the salutary effects of the second Adam's virtue are as extensive as the penal ones of the first Adam's sin: or, as the malignity of that first offence reached even to infants, subjecting them to death, so the benefit of Christ's obedience reaches also to infants, justifying, absolving, and restoring them to life. It procures for and gives to them that 'spirit of life,' which releases and sets them free from 'the law of sin and death.' Now of God's giving, and of men's receiving, this *life-giving* spirit, the baptismal water is the appointed *token* or *emblem* in the church.

"This the Scripture plainly intimates, by saying 'We are saved by the washing of regeneration (i. e. baptism, the sign), and by the renewing of the Holy Ghost (the thing signified in that ceremonial washing), which he hath shed

* Psalm li. 5.

† Gen. iii. 16.

‡ 1 Cor. xv. 22.

§ Rom. v. 18, 19.

(poured out) upon us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

“From this discourse of the apostle,† the following deductions evidently flow. 1. That in the construction of the Christian law, infants are, most certainly, in a state of condemnation, and are treated as sinners. 2. That they are, therefore, capable of justification or remission, and stand in absolute need of it, in as much as without it they must eternally lie under the sentence of death. 3. As they are capable of this grace, and stand in absolute need of it, express provision is made in the constitution of the gospel covenant for their being ‘*justified and saved*.’ But, 4. All who by the gospel covenant are entitled to justification, salvation, and life, are entitled also to baptism; for baptism is a rite, instituted by God, to signify or betoken that those who are entitled to the blessings of his covenant shall certainly receive them.

“The baptism of infants, viewed in this light, is a very natural institution. The great parent of mankind having in the wisdom of his providence subjected so vast a part of the race to miseries and pains through no default of their own, it was quite reasonable to believe that his mercy would appoint them some testimony of his favour, some monument or pledge that he had not abandoned this noble part of his creation to the ruin and death under which they were fallen. That, as they continually suffered the visible tokens of his displeasure in a variety of tormenting agonies, so he would graciously ordain them also some visible token of his good will, some perpetual and standing sign of his still accounting them his children, and that they were yet the objects of his tender and parental regard. It was perfectly just, I say, and reasonable to imagine that the great parent of these tortured and suffering innocents, whenever he erected a church upon earth, would appoint some such standing token of his mercy and favour to them. Now this, we see, he did under the two former dispensations, both of Abraham and Moses; and doubtless it gave their pious parents great consolation under

* Titus iii. 5.

† Rom. v.

these dispensations, when they saw him languishing in extreme pains, and giving up the ghost, to reflect upon the solemn token by which the Almighty had accepted them as his children, and had promised to be their God. But can it ever be conceived that the dispensation of Jesus Christ is defective in this important point? That it herein comes behind, and is inferior to, both the former? That it has no such standing token of God's mercy to condemned infants, nor any rite by which he visibly admits them now, as he formerly did, into his family or church? Is he a God in covenant to the *Abrahamic* and to the *Jewish* infants only, and not to *Christian* infants also? With great assurance we can say, to Christian infants also.

“We are not to imagine that all infants, dying such, but those of believers, or all which die unbaptized, will be annihilated, or never rise again; but the superior advantage to believers' infants above others is, 1. That with respect to these, God has been pleased to lay himself under a more particular covenant or promise of a resurrection to a future happiness; whereas the other are left more to his uncovenanted mercy. And, 2. Their circumstances in a future state may, agreeably to all the moral perfections of God, be supposed more happy and advantageous than theirs who were never thus so solemnly devoted to him. It being an evident and important part of the scheme of God's moral government, that great blessings and favours shall be conferred upon some in consequence, and as a reward, of the earnest and sincere prayers and piety of others.

“All rational creatures, there is reason to believe, are some where or other placed in a state of discipline or probation, before they pass into a state of fixed and unalterable bliss. Heaven itself was, if it be not at present, a state of trial to angels. Infants, dying such, therefore, there is ground to presume, pass into such a state. Now as, in our present state of trial, some are placed in circumstances far more advantageous and favourable than others, so, probably, is it in the state to which dying infants pass. Abraham's

posterity were put in circumstances more favourable for attaining virtue and happiness than other nations of the earth, on account of their fathers' piety. The same may be justly hoped as to the dying infants of good men, who, according to God's command, have been solemnly devoted to him, whom he hath acknowledged for *his children*, and to whom he hath by a sacred covenant *promised to be a God*.

"And as it thus evidently appears that, in the original construction and frame of his church, provision was made that the infants of God's people should be admitted into his *covenant*, so it may be added, that such a *solemn dedication* as is made in baptism of an infant by its parents to God the Supreme Parent, seems to be a most *natural* and *rational* service, a service which a pious mind can scarce possibly forbear. Having received so great a gift and trust from the Almighty Sovereign, how natural and proper is it that, soon upon its birth, and while a sense of the obligation is yet warm upon the heart, he should make some *solemn acknowledgment* that he has received it from God; should *openly devote* it to him, and lay himself under a *sacred vow* to educate it religiously, and bring it up in his fear! The light of nature itself seems plainly to have taught this. It was the custom of the Romans, on the ninth day from the child's birth (which was called the lustrical, or the day of purification), for its friends and relations to bring it to the temple, and before the altars of the gods to recommend it to the protection of some tutelar deity. A ceremony of the same nature also was performed among the Greeks. Is not this evidently a becoming *temper* and *action* upon receiving such a trust? Would it not naturally have a good influence on the conduct of the parent, with regard to his child, disposing him either to *resign* it more cheerfully if taken from him by death, or to *train it up* more religiously if its life be continued? And might it not be hoped that God would graciously accept and reward the piety of such a parent with *peculiar blessings* on such a child.

"But from this *general view* of the several dispensations

of religion with respect to *infants*, from which their right to *baptism* may be strongly presumed, we proceed further to establish it by clear and direct proofs.

“It is an incontestible fact, that the infants of believers were, in former dispensations or ages of the church, taken together with their parents *into covenant with God*, and had, by his express command, a sacrament or rite given them as a *token* that Jehovah *was* their God, and that in consequence hereof he counted them for his children, and as standing in a *peculiar relation* to himself.*

“If this great privilege was once granted by God to his church, it is a privilege still subsisting, and is now in actual and full force, if it has not been revoked. But—

“This privilege or grant has never been revoked. No such revocation, or any shadow of it, appears in the whole book of God. Therefore—

“The infants of believers having still a right to their ancient unrepealed privilege of being admitted with their parents into covenant with God, and of having its token applied to them, it hence necessarily follows that they have a right to Christian baptism, for baptism is now the only appointed token or ceremony of admission.

“These propositions, it is humbly apprehended, amount to a demonstration of the point in debate. Which of them can be denied? Will any man say, 1. That the infants of believers, in the former ages of the church, were not taken with their parents into covenant with God; had not, by his express command, a sacrament or rite given them in token that Jehovah was their God; and that, in consequence of this, they were not considered and treated as being in a peculiar manner his? This no man will affirm. Will it then be said, 2. That this, though it was granted to the infants of good men of old, was really no privilege nor favour to them? Neither durst any man assert this. Can it be urged then, 3. That this privilege, though granted anciently to the church, and enjoyed by it many ages, does not now continue to it, nor ought now to be enjoyed by

* Gen. xvii. 7—12; Deut. xxix. 10—12; Ezek. xvi. 20, 21.

it, though it be at the same time acknowledged not to have been repealed? Absurd to imagine! Will it be said, then, that this ancient privilege or grant has indeed been repealed? Let the repeal be shewn, and the point shall be given up. There appears no such repeal, nor any thing like it, in the whole sacred Scriptures: on the contrary, there appears many things, as will presently be seen, abundantly to confirm this invaluable privilege, and to strengthen and enlarge it. And indeed it were the height of absurdity to imagine that Jesus Christ came to cut short the privileges of the church in any single point, and to cast the children of believers out of God's covenant, who before were taken into it.

"It being impossible to deny, then, that the infants of believers have still a right to their ancient unrepealed privilege of being admitted with their parents into God's covenant, and of having its token applied to them, the consequence is inevitable. That they have then a right to baptism, the appointed token of God's covenant, and the only initiatory rite by which persons are now admitted into it.

"The point is further proved thus. The covenant which God made with Abraham and with his seed,* (into which his *infants* were taken together with himself by the rite of circumcision)—that covenant, I say, is the very same which we are now under, even the Christian or gospel covenant; and Abraham, in that transaction, acted and is considered under the character of our father, the father of us, believing gentiles: the original grants, therefore, and privileges of that covenant must necessarily belong to us, believing gentiles, his seed. Now it was an indisputable grant or privilege of that covenant, that infants should be received, together with their parents, into it, and solemnly pass under its sacrament or seal. This grant, therefore, or privilege, in behalf of our infants, we, believing gentiles, may now confidently claim.

"That we, believing gentiles, are the seed really included and intended in that covenant, and that Abraham in that transaction was considered as our father, is a point actually

* Gen. xvii.

and most clearly determined by St. Paul. For in two several epistles,* when he is explaining the nature and extent of the Christian or gospel covenant, he quotes this covenant made with Abraham,† refers to it, reasons from it, and fetches arguments thence to prove that believers from among the gentiles are under the Christian dispensation, to be fellow heirs with the Jews, and are the real seed of Abraham, intended in that covenant. See Rom. iv. 9, particularly ver. 16, 17.

“Expressly to the same purpose, the apostle also assures us, ‡ *that they who are of faith* (believers), *the same are the children of Abraham.* And *If ye are Christ’s* (i. e. believers), *then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.*§ And again, ‘That to Abraham, and to his seed, were the promises made.’|| Now that the promises, or covenant, here referred to, which the apostle affirms to be still in force, and not to be disannulled, must be, and is, this covenant, ¶ into which infants were taken by a visible rite, is most evident; because this is the only covenant in which God ever made and confirmed promises to Abraham and to his seed.

“Seeing, then, it is incontestible that we believing gentiles are the seed intended in that covenant, it follows that we have an undoubted right to all its privileges and grants; consequently, to the admission of our infants into it; and consequently, to their passing under its token or sign.

“This token or sign was originally circumcision: but when God sent his Son into the world further to explain and confirm this covenant, and to publish it to all nations, he was pleased to alter its token, or initiating rite, from circumcision to baptism; partly, perhaps, as circumcision was a painful and bloody rite, and obnoxious to great reproach and contempt amongst the gentiles; but principally, because both sexes were now to be alike visibly received into the covenant; and under this new dispensation of it, there was to be neither male nor female.**

“That circumcision is abolished, is acknowledged by all;

* Rom. iv. and Gal. iii. † Gen. xvii. ‡ Gal. iii. 7. § Verse 29.

|| Verse 16, 17. ¶ Gen. xvii. ** Gal. iii. 28.

but the Abrahamic covenant still subsisting, and being no other than the gospel covenant; and of this gospel covenant it being acknowledged that baptism is now the appointed token or sign; it hence evidently follows, that baptism now succeeds in the room of circumcision. Accordingly it is called the Christian circumcision, or *circumcision of Christ*.*

“Thus then stands the argument, in short — ‘If we are Christ’s (believers), then are we Abraham’s seed:’ † but, if we are Abraham’s seed, we have then a right to all the grants and privileges of that covenant which God made with Abraham, and with his seed: but the admission of his infants, together with himself, was an indisputable grant or privilege of that covenant: therefore, as it was given to Abraham our father, it must necessarily remain and endure to us, his seed.

“Infants are not baptized as being themselves the seed of Abraham; but as being the children, or property, of those who are the seed of Abraham: for as Abraham’s faith brought not himself only, but his infants together with him, into the covenant of God, so the faith of Abraham’s seed (believers) brings not themselves only, but their infants together with them, into the same covenant: else the covenant would not be established in the same manner to his seed, as it was to Abraham himself; which yet is plainly promised.‡

“A third argument for admitting infants to Baptism may be drawn from the sense in which the apostles, when sent forth to baptize, would naturally, and even necessarily, understand their comparison. ‘GO TEACH (disciple or proselyte) ALL NATIONS, BAPTIZING THEM.’§ It is now enquired, in what sense they would understand this commission? Whether, authorising them to baptize only the believing adult; or to give this token of God’s covenant also to the infants of such believers? The commission is delivered in such general terms as not certainly to determine this. If any part of it can be said to exclude infants, it must be the word teach (the word rendered *teach*, in Greek, in the 19th verse, is not the same with that in the next verse,

* Col. ii. 11, 12. † Gal. iii. 29. ‡ Gen. xvii. 7, 10, 11. § Matt. xxviii. 19.

'*teaching* them to observe all things'—but is of a more large and comprehensive signification, and is better rendered, to proselyte or disciple). But suppose it had been said—*Go teach, proselyte all nations, circumcising them*—would not the apostles, without any farther warrant, have naturally and justly thought that, upon proselyting the gentile parent and circumcising him, his infants also were to be circumcised? Or, if a divine command had been given to the twelve patriarchs of old, to go into Egypt, Arabia, &c. and *teach them the God of Abraham, circumcising them*—would they not, must they not, have understood it as authorising them to perform this ceremony, not upon the parent only, but also upon the infants of such as believed in the God of Abraham? Without all question, they would.

"Hence then it is plain, that the word *teach* (disciple or proselyte) concludes nothing, certainly, against infants being admitted, with their believing parents, into God's covenant by baptism. But, if the word *teach* does not necessarily exclude infants, let us see whether there are not such circumstances attending this commission, as would naturally, and even necessarily, lead the apostles to apprehend infants to be actually included therein.

"Now here let it be considered—who the persons were, to whom the commission was given? They were Jews; men, who had been educated in the knowledge of that covenant, which God had made with Abraham and their fathers; and who knew it still to be in force.—Men, who had seen that, in all covenant transactions betwixt God and his church, the infants of believers had always been admitted, together with their parents, and passed under the same initiating rite.—Men, who apprehended this their admission to be a great privilege or favour to them; and knew, or were to be soon informed, that the gentiles (*all nations*) were now to be taken into a joint participation of all the privileges of the Jewish church; to be grafted into the *same olive-tree*; and to be joint-heirs with them of all their religious immunities or grants. They, moreover, knew it to be the constant, immemorial practice of the church, that when any gentile

was taught (proselyted to the worship of the God of Israel), himself was baptized, and all his infants were baptized with him, and these infants were called proselytes. Further, they were men extremely jealous and tenacious of their ancient rites.—They had seen also, under their law, by God's express command, children of a month old, and upwards, enrolled in the temple register; and entered as ministers to Aaron, as *doing the service of the tabernacle*, and as *keeping the charge of the sanctuary*,* and claimed by God as his servants.† They had been often witnesses to the kind regard their master had shewn to *little children*; and had been once severely rebuked by him for hindering their being brought to receive his benediction; and *saw him laying his hands on them*, and solemnly declaring them to be *subjects of his kingdom*.—Further, they knew that baptism was appointed as a token from God of the remission of sin, or of justification; and that infants were in the eye of the Christian law treated as sinners, and under a sentence of condemnation. Finally: they knew that Christ came, not to lessen or abridge the privileges of God's church (of which this admission of infants was confessedly one), but to heighten and to enlarge them.—Let these several circumstances be impartially weighed, and then let any man say—whether, as the commission will admit of a favourable and a large sense, so as to include infants, the apostles would not naturally, and even necessarily, suppose them comprehended therein? and whether there was not a most strong and most manifest necessity, if Christ intended that infants should not be included in it, that he should have expressly excepted them?

“The commission viewed in this, which is its proper and true light, is so far from concluding any thing against the baptizing infants, that it strongly favours and supports it. For since it is delivered in such general terms as to be capable of admitting infants; and since, from the above circumstances, the apostles would naturally and unavoidably understand it as intending their admission; it follows, that

* Numb. iii. 6—8, 28.

† Lev. xxv. 41, 42.

our Lord's silence, as to these, is a strong and most manifest presumption in their favour; and that his not excluding or excepting them from the Christian covenant is, in all equitable construction, a permission or order that they should be admitted into it.

"In Rom. xi., the Apostle, discoursing of the exclusion of a chief part of the Jews from the visible church of God, and the reception of the Gentiles in their stead, speaks of it under this figure, verse 17. 'And if some of the branches (the Jews) be broken off, and thou (a Gentile), being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in amongst them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; boast not,' &c. Here let it be noted — The *olive tree* is the Abrahamic covenant or church; from which the unbelieving Jews are cast out; and into which the believing Gentiles are taken in their stead. The root and fatness of this olive tree, of which the ingrafted branches partake, are the religious privileges, or grants, belonging to that covenant or church. Now it was a very valuable and indisputable privilege of that covenant, that the faith of a parent grafted his children, together with himself, into that olive tree, *i. e.* admitted them into the church, or into a covenant relation to God. Therefore the unbelieving Jew being cut off from this root, and the believing Gentile succeeding, and being grafted into his room, and partaking jointly with the natural branches of all their church privileges, immunities, and grants, he must undoubtedly partake of this privilege too.

"What part of this argument can possibly be denied? Will it be said, that the faith of a parent did not *graft* his children, together with himself, into the visible church before the coming of Christ? No — Or, that this was not a privilege? No. — Can it be urged, then, that believing gentiles are not now taken in, to be '*joint partakers of the root*,'* *i. e.* of the church privileges and grants which the unbelieving Jew has lost? This were highly absurd: for they are expressly declared by the apostle† to be fellow-heirs of the *same body*, and *joint partakers* of the promise.

* Rom. xi. 17.

† Eph. iii. 6.

“The argument, then, most clearly and strongly concludes for the visible admission of the infants of believing Gentiles, together with themselves, into the covenant and church of God. *Is he the God of the Jews only?* Is he not *also of the Gentiles?* A God in the same manner, in the same latitude and extent, to us as he was to them? Yes; he is undoubtedly thus a God to believing Gentiles also. Accordingly, Isaiah, speaking of the Christian dispensation, or the state of the church under the Messiah, says, that not only believers should be esteemed the seed of the blessed of the Lord (or the blessed seed of the Lord), but also their offspring together with them.*

“From our Saviour’s own words, ‘Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God;† and ‘Except any one is born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God;‡ from these two passages, I say, put together, the right of infants to baptism may be also clearly inferred. For in one, they are declared actually to have a place in God’s kingdom or church; and yet, into this kingdom or church, the other as expressly says, none can be admitted without being baptized.

“The *kingdom* of God, in the gospel, denotes either the visible church on earth, or the invisible one in heaven. Answerable to these, there is a twofold regeneration, namely, a being ‘born again of water,’ *i. e.* baptism, which is therefore called ‘the washing of regeneration,’§ which admits into the visible church; and a being ‘born again of the Spirit’ (called the ‘renewing of the Holy Ghost’), which admits into the invisible. Now, in which soever of these senses the expression is here taken, it strongly concludes for the baptism of infants. For,

“If by the *kingdom of God* be meant the visible church on earth, our Lord, by saying, of such is the kingdom, declares that infants are to be considered as having a place in the kingdom, *i. e.* as being members of that body, society, or church, which he as Messiah came to rule and to save.

* Is. lxx. 23.

† Mark x. 14.

‡ John iii. 5.

§ Tit. iii. 5.

But, if they are to be considered as a part of this kingdom, or visible church, they are then to be baptized, or born again of water, for this is the only appointed rite of entering into it. Or,

“If by the *kingdom of God* we understand the invisible church in heaven, into that infants cannot enter, except they are born again of the Spirit, *i. e.* regenerated, quickened, and raised from the dead. But, if they are capable and proper subjects of a regeneration of the Spirit, they must be also of baptism; for the baptismal water is nothing else but the appointed token or emblem of this regenerating Spirit. Seeing, then, that God grants them the thing signified, *viz.*, the ‘renewing of the Holy Ghost,’ it can never be thought his will that the sign or token be denied them, *viz.*, *the washing of regeneration*, or baptism.

“The argument then is conclusive, in whatever sense we take the kingdom of God. For our Lord having, in one place, declared that ‘the little children should be brought to him, because of such is the kingdom;’ and in another, ‘that except any one is born of water, baptized, he cannot enter into this kingdom’—it most evidently follows, that infants are capable of being born again of water, or baptized; because else they could not enter into this kingdom, into which our Lord here expressly declares they do *enter* and are admitted.

“It cannot be here said, that the words *of such* are to be understood, not of infants in years, but of persons of a child-like and humble disposition. Because, this would represent our Lord’s conduct as extremely absurd. For, why should he be very angry with his disciples for forbidding infants in years to be brought to him, because of grown persons of an humble disposition his kingdom consisted? There is no just connexion betwixt his great displeasure at them for keeping infants from him, and his giving as the reason of it, that to quite different subjects, meek and humble persons, his kingdom belonged. According to this interpretation, our Lord might rationally have done the same, had lambs or doves been going to be presented to him; he might have

been very angry with those who should have forbid them, and have said—‘Suffer them to be brought, for of such,’ *i. e.* of persons of a meek and harmless temper, ‘is the kingdom of God.’

“Finally; let it be added, that as our Lord took these infants ‘into his arms, laid his hands upon, and blessed them,’ hence it appears that infants are capable of the Divine influence, benediction, and the operations of the Holy Spirit. Now what are these, but the very things principally intended to be represented by the baptismal water? Though our Lord did not pour water on them, putting up a prayer for them, he performed a religious ceremony on them equally solemn, and of much (perhaps exactly) the same purport; he laid his hands upon them and prayed;’ which was an act of religious worship hardly at all different from baptizing them with water. Yea, it was a far greater thing for the Saviour of the world to take up infants in his arms, and solemnly to bless them, than for any minister now to baptize them with water in his name. Further,

“It is also very worthy to be observed, that the Christian dispensation, as well as the Jewish, makes an evident distinction betwixt the children of believers and the children of infidels.

“Several of the Corinthian converts, having unbelieving yokefellow, doubted of the lawfulness of cohabiting with them; and seemed to think themselves obliged to separate, lest the offspring of such unequal marriages should be deemed impure, and unmeet to be taken into the covenant with God. This their doubt seemed to be just, and to carry in it great weight; being grounded on the known conduct of Ezra, and the Jewish elders, in a parallel case.* But the apostle resolves it by telling them—that *the unbelieving yokefellow was so far sanctified by (or to, or because of) the believing, as that their children, which would otherwise be unclean, are now holy.*† Here then we see a most clear and evident distinction made betwixt the children of believers and the children of infidels; the one are *unclean, i. e.* do

* Ezra x. 1, 2, 3.

† 1 Cor. vii. 14.

not stand in any visible covenant relation to Jehovah, and the other are holy, *i. e.* in the same sense holy as the Jews were an holy nation, taken into a peculiar relation to God.

“This sentiment, of an infant’s holiness, and of the propriety and duty of its being brought into the church of God, and there solemnly devoted to him, was quite scriptural and rational; as well as perfectly agreeable to the appointed customs, and forms, and language of those times. For it is said*—they brought the infant Jesus to the temple to present him to the Lord: as it is written in the law; ‘Every first-born male shall be holy to the Lord.’ Hence it plainly follows, That infants are capable of holiness; and that some were accounted holy (*i. e.* taken into a more peculiar relation to God), whilst others were not: and, That our Lord himself, when an infant, passed under a sacred ceremony, of the same nature with our infants when we bring them to be baptized.

“These several Scriptures being impartially weighed, the propriety and fitness of bringing children to baptism seems to be established beyond all rational doubt. As a conclusion of this argument, I beg leave to ask,—Must not the Christian dispensation be allowed, in all things, to have the preference, and to be better than the Jewish? But if it excludes our infants from the covenant of God, and from standing in any federal relation to heaven; then here is one, and that a very important and considerable instance in which it is vastly inferior. Now, had this really been the case, how mighty and just a prejudice would it have raised in the Jews against Christianity! What complaints and objections should we, doubtless, have heard them making against this new dispensation, and casting their children out of God’s covenant, and putting them upon a level with those of infidels and pagans! But, as amongst their many and loud cavils at the religion of Christ, and the continued oppositions and reproaches of the Judaisers, we find not the least shadow of a complaint of this kind, it may with great assurance be concluded, there was no occasion given; but

* Luke ii. 22, 23.

that Christianity, as it found, so it continued and confirmed, the infants of good men in the covenant of God.

“Having proceeded thus far” in my evidence, “I beg leave here to recapitulate, and sum up the force of what has been offered, in the following queries; which will soon lead a fair enquirer to an easy issue of the” cause.

“Query 1. Are not infants, in the eye or construction of the Christian law, under a sentence of condemnation, and treated as sinners?

“2. Are they not, consequently, in the eye of that law, capable of justification, and of being treated as righteous?

“3. If, then, they are capable of justification and remission, is it not most highly reasonable, and even necessary, to suppose that the Christian law, which is a manifestation of God’s richest mercy to mankind, has made provision for it, and given some token of it?

“4. Were not the infants of believers taken into covenant with God; and did they not stand in a more immediate relation to him, than the infants of unbelieving Canaanites, Moabites, &c., both under the Abrahamic and Mosaic dispensations?—And was not this a peculiar honour and advantage to these infants?

“5. Are not the infants of us, Christians, as capable of this favour, viz. of being taken visibly into God’s covenant, as their (the Israelites) infants were: but if ours are not, is it not here an important circumstance, in which both the Abrahamic and Mosaic dispensations were more favourable to mankind, and manifested greater grace, than the dispensation of Jesus Christ?—But can this possibly be?

“6. Are not the infants of Christians (who are now an holy priesthood, and who succeed to all the privileges of the Jewish church), are not, I say, their infants as capable of being disciplined, as the infants of the Jewish priesthood were of being enrolled in the Temple register, and entered as ministers to Aaron, and as keeping the charge of the sanctuary? * and are not infants as capable, under the

* Numb. iii. 6—8, 28.

Christian covenant, of being baptized, as they were of circumcision, both under the Abrahamic and Mosaic ?

“Let the Scriptures then interpret themselves, and one part of the divine dispensation be suffered to explain the other (of which other it was intended to be a figure and type), and we shall find it perfectly agreeable to the analogy and style of Scripture, as well as to the reason of things, that infants should be admitted as members of the Christian Church, and are therefore included in the commission to baptize.

“FROM APOSTOLIC TRADITION.—The baptism of infants was the undoubted practice of the Christian Church in its purest and first ages, the ages immediately succeeding the apostles, who could not but know what the apostolic doctrine and practice was as to this matter.

“This I apprehend to be an argument of great weight. For the inquiry being about a fact which could not but be publicly and perfectly known, and not possible to be mistaken, in the ages immediately succeeding the apostles, the sense of those ages concerning this fact must needs be of great moment in deciding the point.

“These, now, are the evidence on which we rest the antiquity of this fact; and by which we prove the baptism of infants to have been the practice in the Christian Church from the very beginning. Justin Martyr, about forty years, Irenæus, about sixty-seven, and Tertullian, about a hundred years after the apostles, gave plain intimations of its being the Christian practice in their times. From Origen, one hundred and ten years; and from Cyprian and the synod of sixty-six bishops, one hundred and fifty years from the above date, we have indisputable proof of its being then the established and standing usage of the church. And Austin and Pelagius, about three hundred and ten years after the apostles (though the latter was under the strongest temptation, and even the necessity, to deny the baptism of infants, had there been any possible ground for it), acknowledge that they never heard, nor read of any, whether true Christian, heretic, or schismatic, who denied baptism to infants.

"To weaken the testimony of the ancient writers and fathers upon this point, some have objected the many foolish and absurd opinions and interpretations of Scriptures with which their writings abound. But this is extremely weak. For they are not here appealed to as reasoners or interpreters, but only as historians or witnesses to a public standing fact.

"If any think it strange that we have no more express testimonies to this practice of the Church, in the writings of these fathers, let him consider—that the far greater part of their writings are lost; and that it is but little more than their names, and a few pieces of their works, especially as to the first age, that are transmitted down to us. And also, that the baptism of infants being then universally practised, and no doubts or dispute having ever been moved about it; and it being likewise the constant, ever-prevailing custom of all the enemies of Christianity, both Jews and Pagans, to admit infants to a participation of their religious ceremonies and rites, together with their parents. These things considered, it will not appear strange that this point is so rarely touched on in the writings of those times.

"With whatever credulity as to miracles, said to be wrought in their days, these early writers may be charged, it cannot at all affect their evidence" in this cause. "For, as there was no possibility of their being themselves deceived as to this matter; so neither could they be under temptation to falsify in their accounts of it. Nor indeed had the temptation been ever so strong, could they have ventured to falsify in a fact notorious to all the world; and when every Christian then living could have stepped forth and borne witness to the falsehood of their account.

"No less than ninety different heresies are said to have sprung up in the three first centuries. Irenæus, Epiphanius, Philastrius, Austin, and Theodoret, it may be justly observed, each of these wrote catalogues of the several sects and sorts of Christians they had ever heard of; but none of them mention any that denied infant baptism, except those who denied all baptism.

"So that, upon the whole, it appears a clear and a very

strongly attested fact, That the practice of baptizing infants was primitive and apostolic; and that the first Christian churches were every where formed and established upon this scheme.

“But the examples of Scripture baptism, our brethren are wont to urge, are all on their side.—This is confidently, indeed, asserted; but upon a closer examination will be found a manifest mistake, there being not, in the whole Scripture, *one single instance* of the baptism for which they plead, and which is practised among them, viz., *That those who are born of Christian parents, are to be suffered to become adult before they are baptized.*—This, it is to be observed carefully, is the point in question. As for the case of adult proselytes, or converts to Christianity, these, we all agree, are not to be baptized till they personally profess faith. The Scripture instances, therefore, of such proselytes, baptized upon such profession, are of no pertinence nor weight at all in the” cause now before this Court; “for these are exactly consonant to our sentiments and practice. The only point, then,” before this Court is, “*What is to be done with the infants of these proselytes?* Are they to be baptized with their parents? Or are they to be let alone till they become adult, and then be baptized upon their personal profession? The latter, our brethren say; but have not, in the whole Scripture, I again affirm it, one instance of such practice; no, nor any shadow or appearance of it. Their boasts, therefore, of Scripture instances, precedents, examples, are mere sound, and nothing else. Whereas the instance of Lydia, (not to mention Stephanas and the jailer) strongly favours our practice; whose faith alone is mentioned, and, immediately it is added, her household were baptized.

“If it be asked, What are the RELIGIOUS or MORAL purposes of this baptism of infants? or, Of what real benefit or use in religion? it were sufficient to reply—Of the same benefit and use as infant circumcision was; which is acknowledged to have been enjoined by God, and practised by his church for more than two thousand years.—But I add, it is of great moral benefit, as it is both a solemn vow or dedi-

cation on our part, and a gracious condescension and promise on God's.

"It is a solemn vow or dedication on our part. For, herein the religious parent publicly recognizes his own covenant with God; binds himself by a sacred promise to watch over the immortal soul now committed to his charge, and train it up in a religious manner; and devotes first himself, and then his helpless infant, to the divine patronage and care.

"Baptizing in (or unto) the name—signifies commending a person to the peculiar *blessing* and patronage of him, or them, in whose name he is baptized. Thus, when the form of solemn benediction is described, 'The Lord bless thee and keep thee,' &c.,* it is added, 'And they shall *put my name* upon the children of Israel, and I will bless them.'

"It is a token of his covenant; a memorial or sign that he graciously accepts both the religious parent and his child, and *that he will be their God*. By this rite he assures us, that as, in the wisdom of his providence, he treats infants as sinners, through the transgression of Adam; so, in the riches of his grace, he has opened a fountain for their cleansing; will treat them as righteous, through the obedience of Christ; and will give them his Spirit, to quicken, regenerate, and raise them to life. Of this Spirit the baptismal water is the appointed emblem or sign.

"It is, then, a rational act of worship, for parents, from the very dawn and first beginnings of life, to devote their children to God, and to the peculiar influences of his Spirit.—The water poured on them being an apt and proper emblem of his readiness to hear the prayers of the pious parent, and to give his Spirit to the child; to preside over, and assist, its intellectual and moral powers; to form it to a love of virtue; and to fit and predispose it for usefulness in future life.

"By infants of believers, are not to be understood only their natural offspring; but any infants which are their property, or members of their household, or for whose religious education they will solemnly undertake. Thus, not only Abraham's own children, but 'all born in his house, or

* Numb. vi. 23.

bought with his money, he was commanded ‘to circumcise.’* So when Lydia, Stephanas, and the jailer were baptized, it is particularly observed that their households were baptized with them. Foundling infants, therefore, are very rationally brought to baptism, by those who will engage solemnly for their Christian education.

There are some worthy and good persons (extremely strange to consider!) who lay so great stress upon this trivial circumstance (baptism) in religion, as to allow none to be *baptized* Christians, but those who have been *dipt*—to break off Christian fellowship, and renounce communion as saints, with men of the most shining piety, if they have not been thus baptized.

“Many pious but weak minds have been greatly disturbed, not to say distressed, with scruples on this head. When they hear it confidently affirmed—That *baptism* evermore and constantly implies *dipping*—That no person ever was, or can be *baptized*, who has not been *dipt*—and consequently that themselves are as really *unbaptized* as *Pagans* or *Turks*,—it fills them with concern,—they doubt whether they are not wanting in obedience to an express command and institution of Christ.

“Effectually to remove every scruple of this kind; to shew that there is no occasion of putting this *yoke upon the neck of the disciples*, and to vindicate CHRISTIANITY from the unworthy imputation of laying so great a stress upon so merely *circumstantial* and *external* a thing, is the design of” my ensuing evidence. “How far it will be effectual to answer this purpose, is humbly left to the favour of heaven, and to the calm and impartial judgment” of this jury.

“IS CHRISTIAN BAPTISM TO BE ADMINISTERED ONLY BY IMMERSION, OR, DIPPING THE BODY UNDER WATER? OR, MAY IT NOT ALSO BY SPRINKLING OR POURING WATER ON IT? The following—is intended to prove,

“First. That *dipping* the body under water was not the *only* ancient and scriptural way of *baptizing*. And,

“Secondly. That if it was, yet a strict adherence to it

* Gen. xvii. 13.

is not obligatory upon us; but that this *circumstance* may, very lawfully and properly, be now exchanged for that of *sprinkling* or *pouring*.

“We are wont to consider baptism as a purely Christian institution; and to trace it to no higher origin than *Jesus Christ*, or *John the Baptist*. But this is certainly wrong. Baptism was, unquestionably, a divine institution, practised as a religious and sacred ceremony in the church of God, ages before. There were *divers kinds of baptisms*, the apostle expressly says,* in which the worship of God stood under the Jewish dispensation. Neither John nor our Saviour did properly institute this rite, but only took this ancient, standing, religious institution, and applied it to a particular purpose in their mission.

“They made no alteration in its general nature or design. Baptism, under the New Testament, has the very same general meaning, purpose, or intent, with baptism under the Old; and is but an application of water to signify or betoken a person to be holy, or consecrated to the service of God. It is a ceremonial, and but a ceremonial, washing in both.

“What then was the manner in which baptism was wont to be administered under the old Testament? was it *only by dipping* wholly under water? or was it not *also by sprinkling*, or *pouring it on*? I reply—undoubtedly *by both*.

“When a leper, who had been put out from the camp of Israel as being unclean or unholy, was again to be taken in, and received to the communion of saints, and to a free access to God, by what ceremony was it done? *SPRINKLING water on him* was one of the principal rites by which he was thus received.†

“When the Israelites were called out from among the idolatrous Egyptians, and were sanctified and set apart as a *holy people* or church of God; they *were all baptized*, the Apostle says, *by the cloud and by the sea*;‡ *i. e.* by the cloud *pouring down water on them*, and by the sea *sprinkling* them with its surges as they passed through, as God sent a strong east wind to drive back and divide the waters; the same in-

* Heb. ix. 10.

† Lev. xiv. 7.

‡ 1 Cor. x. 2.

strument was, no doubt, employed to continue them in this state. Now by the mighty agitation into which the waters were cast by this violent repulsion, and the strong wind at the same time furiously blowing, it is easy to conceive the passing Israelites must be sprinkled with the spray of the tossing waves, and thus were baptized by it.

“Here then is another incontestible instance of a scripture baptism without immersion. The Israelites are expressly said to *be baptized in*, or by, *the sea*, as well as by *the cloud*; yet no one will presume to say they were buried or overwhelmed in it.

“In Heb. ix. 10, it is said, the Jewish dispensation ‘stood in meats, and drinks, and DIVERS BAPTISMS.’ All who understand the original, know, that the words do and must mean *divers sorts of baptisms*, or baptisms of different species or kinds, *i. e.* different manners or modes of applying water, for ceremonial purification, under the Jewish law. Some of these were by dipping, some by sprinkling or pouring.

“‘By one Spirit we are all baptized into one body;’ and ‘he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.’ How was this done? The Scripture itself informs us, *viz.* by ‘the Holy Ghost descending and sitting on them in the form of cloven tongues of fire.’ Note, they were not overwhelmed or covered with the fire when they were baptized with it; but it only fell upon and rested on them.

“So then the manner in which ‘we all by one Spirit are baptized into one body’ is by having that Spirit *shed down*, or *poured out* upon us; and of the imparting to us this *Spirit*, the baptismal water is the appointed emblem, representation, or sign.

“Finally. The circumstances or state of those in the ark,* is said to be a *figure* or resemblance of Christian baptism; but they were not dipt into the water and taken up again, as it is contended baptized persons ought to be, but only had water poured down upon them.

“From these observations on the sense of the word βαπτίζω,

* 1 Peter iii. 21.

to baptize, in the New Testament, we proceed to its use in the Greek version of the Old, and in the Apocrypha. In Judith xii. 7, it is said, 'She went out in the night into the valley of Bethulia and washed——*and was baptized in a fountain of water by the camp.*' Did she dip her whole body? Yes, some earnestly contend, but utterly without reason, and against all probability. As, close by, or around which, an army of above two hundred thousand soldiers lay encamped, it is the height of absurdity to imagine that Judith, in the night, could with any convenience or modesty unclothe herself, and plunge her whole body therein, or, if she could, that the soldiers would have suffered it, in a country where water was so much needed. This, then, must be accounted another very clear and incontestible instance, where a person is said to be baptized without being overwhelmed.

"When the prophet bids Naaman 'wash seven times,' it is much more natural to understand it of sprinkling or pouring water seven times upon the leprous part (over which he expected the prophet should have stroked his hand), than of dipping his whole body seven times, of which kind of washing there is not the least footstep nor shadow in the law. So the blind man is commanded, 'Go wash in the pool of Siloam,'* when not his whole body, doubtless, but only his eyes, besmeared with clay, were to be washed.

"Thus have we considered the Scripture sense of the word βαπτίζω, to baptize; and have, it is presumed, fully proved it to be used when the act of pouring or sprinkling, not dipping, is intended.

"The very things which are intended to be represented by Christian baptism, what figure does he (Ezekiel) use? 'I will sprinkle clean water upon them, and they shall be clean.'† So when Isaiah describes the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom, he does it under the same figure—'He shall sprinkle many nations:'‡ and, 'I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring.'§ Now from these, and other like passages,

* John ix. 7.

† Ezek. xxxvi. 25.

‡ Isa. lii. 15.

§ Isa. xlv. 3.

it may be fairly argued thus. Forasmuch as the water in Christian baptism, applied to the body, is confessedly but an emblematical or figurative thing, and was intended to represent some spiritual blessing to be imparted to the soul; and forasmuch as this spiritual blessing, which is intended to be represented by it, is in the Old Testament often spoken of as to be given when the New should take place, under the emblem of water *sprinkled or poured out*, it follows, that if the word βαπτίζω, to baptize, will at all admit of this sense, then it is perfectly agreeable to the analogy of Scripture to administer the baptismal water by *sprinkling or pouring*.

“But it is objected—‘John was baptizing in Ænon, because there was much water there.’* Does not this very clearly and certainly imply that he baptized the multitudes by dipping? I apprehend, not at all. For there were other necessary and important uses for *many waters* besides dipping the multitudes; other weighty and just causes why John should choose this well watered and fruitful country for the scene of his ministrations. Let it be considered, how valuable and scarce water was in those parts—how hot the climate—how numerous the crowds which flocked to John’s baptism—from how distant parts they came—how long they tarried to hear his doctrine and instructions,—for the mere act of baptizing was the least part of John’s mission, and of the people’s end in flocking to him,—let these be considered, and there will appear sundry good reasons for his choosing this well watered and fruitful country for the place of his preaching, without any regard had to the convenience of dipping.

“If these multitudes were all dipped, how was it done? Were they naked? This modesty forbids. Had they all change of raiment, to undress and put on dry apparel when they came out of the water? This the vastness of the multitudes, the openness of the country, and the great distance whence they came, will not easily admit. And that they stood in their wet garments, and hearkened to John’s doctrine, or travelled in them many miles to their homes, seems equally

* John iii. 23.

improbable. I pretend to no certainty that John did not dip at all. But as he had seen, by the express appointment of God, water applied both ways to the human body for ceremonial purification, viz., by *sprinkling* and *dipping*, and both these are by the Spirit which sent him to baptize actually called *baptisms*, it is possible he might use both ways of administration, according to the circumstances of time, place, and persons required.

“The priests plunging a person, in order to his separation or cleansing, is a ceremony quite strange, and absolutely unheard of through all the sacred records. Persons were indeed, on some occasions, directed to plunge or bathe themselves; but that one man should take another and plunge him under water, is a thing utterly uncommanded, unprecedented, and unknown, throughout the whole constitution and history of the Jewish church. It may, therefore, strongly be presumed not to have been the practice either of John or of Jesus Christ when the Christian was set up.

“If it be said—But that question of the Jews, ‘Why baptizest thou, if thou art not that prophet?’ implies there was something new and unprecedented in John’s baptism;—The answer is obvious; 1, that it could not be his mere using the ceremony of baptizing which occasioned this enquiry, because it was, confessedly, a ceremony perfectly well known and familiar amongst them. But, 2, it was his using this ceremony upon the Israelites or Jewish nation, who looked upon themselves as a people already holy, and in covenant with God, and therefore not to need this ceremony of cleansing or separation, under which the Gentiles were wont to pass when received into the church.

“So that the jailer and his whole family, who were all taught, converted, and baptized about midnight, without any previous thought of, or preparation for, this ceremony, had it done by dipping: as, likewise, that Saul, afterwards St. Paul, having neither eaten nor drank* for *three days before*; and being greatly enfeebled by the mighty shock which he received from the vision in the way, as well as by the great

* Acts ix. 18.

remorse with which he reviewed, and repented of his crimes; and it being now also in the depth of winter, about the 25th of January, as the learned have supposed; that in this weakly and enfeebled state, I say, *he arose and was baptized*, by being totally put under water:—and finally, that the three thousand* also, who were converted at Jerusalem, and baptized in one day, were all overwhelmed, seems, to say the least, to have scarce an air of probability.

“Nor will the circumstance of Philip and the Eunuch going down *unto* the water, and *coming up from it*, with any certainty prove that he there dipt him. For as waters run in the valleys, they might go down from the chariot *to*, or *unto*, the rivulet (for geographers find but little streams there), and Philip baptize by pouring water on him; and from thence go up to the chariot again, in the most perfect consistence with this account of the matter.

“So, when the people of Judea are said to be baptized of John *in the river Jordan*; and that *Jesus*, when baptized, came up out of, *or from*, the water, it will by no means hence follow, that they were totally plunged under it. For, it being the custom of those countries to wear sandals only on their naked feet, and the washing these being amongst them a very familiar and delightful thing, the going down into the water to have it poured upon their heads is quite natural and likely. So that the arguments drawn hence also in favour of overwhelming will in no wise conclude.

“The laying any weight on its being said—‘were baptized *IN* Jordan,’ shews extreme ignorance of the original. For, the word *ἐν*, here translated *in*, is in no less than a hundred and fifty places of the New Testament (a learned gentleman hath observed) rendered *with*. And had it thus been rendered here—baptized with Jordan, meaning with the water of that river, it would have been a form of speaking, neither more figurative nor improper, than is familiar both in Scripture and in common life.”

“Can it be proved that any one person in the New Testament was immersed?”

* Acts ii. 41.

“ There are seven instances of baptisms which have some connexion with place and circumstances: the baptism of Jesus at Jordan,—the baptizing at Enon,—the baptism of the Eunuch,—of St. Paul,—of Cornelius,—of the jailer,—and the three thousand in Jerusalem. Of these instances, three were in the open air, and at streams of water, two in private houses, one in a jail, and one in a city.

“ If we look for a proof of the immersion of any one, it must be from the first three instances; but here is no proof at all that any one was immersed. It is true, here were persons, and there was water; but whether any person was immersed in water, there is not a word said. All that could be said, and all the most sanguine could say, would be this, ‘ It may be—it is likely—it is highly probable—I am apt to think so!’ Such forms of speech shew there is no proof; and that the best is merely presumption: but if we attend to the other instances, the private houses, the jail, and the city, there is neither proof nor presumption; or, if there be any presumption upon the case, it is entirely on the other side, that is, that there was no immersion practised; and the sum of all is this, that in the first instances, there is not the least proof; and that in the others, there is not the least presumption.

“ Can it be proved that any person baptized was so much as in the water at all? The putting of this question may appear singular to some, who would be ready to say, Can any thing be more evident than this? Did not our Lord come up out of Jordan? Did not Philip and the Eunuch go down into, and come up out of, the water? The truth is, that, whether they went into the water or not, depends upon three small words—*εἰς*, *ἐκ*, or *ἐξ*, and *ἀπο*. The two last are used in the New Testament, I suppose a hundred times, to signify from, and the first as often to signify to; and they necessarily signify no more than to the water and from the water.

“ If, therefore, it cannot be proved that baptism is immersion only,—if it cannot be proved that any one was immersed,—if it cannot be proved that any one baptized was at all in the water, we may be exceedingly easy respect-

ing Mr. Booth's consequence ; for if it appear formidable to such as admit his principles, yet, while there is no proof that these principles are true, to others it must appear as nothing."

"But the chief argument for immersion is taken from Rom. vi. 4, and Col. ii. 12 ; where it said 'That we are buried with Christ by baptism into death ; and buried with him by baptism.'

"Now, here, let it be considered, That the weight of the argument rests entirely upon the supposition, that the apostle in these passages alludes to the mode of Christian baptism, which can with no certainty be proved. For the apostle in both places may be justly understood as speaking, not concerning the external and ceremonial part of Christian baptism, but concerning the internal and moral part ; not concerning the application of water, which has no power to kill, or destroy, *the body of sin* : but concerning the regenerating influences of the Spirit ; by which Spirit the Scriptures often speak of Christians as baptized ; and by the influences of which Spirit (or in consequence of their baptism by which) alone it is, that they are said *to be dead* ; * *dead with Christ* ; † *dead to sin*. ‡ Now as this Spirit only has power to kill, or destroy, the *old man* (to use the apostle's phrase), and to make us *dead with Christ*, and *dead to sin* ; and as we are very frequently represented as *baptized with this Spirit* ; it is perfectly natural to understand the apostle as speaking of these internal and moral influences of the Spirit, when he tells Christians—that they were 'buried with Christ by baptism into death,' &c.—baptism is as expressly styled the *circumcision of Christ*, or the Christian circumcision, as a burial with Christ.

"Finally. Should it be granted, that these two texts favour the mode of dipping, it must certainly be also allowed, that the several texts, before cited, do equally favour sprinkling or pouring in baptism. So that the matter may admit of an easy compromise, by supposing—That as this Christian ceremony undoubtedly had its origin and was borrowed

* Col. iii. 3.

† Col. ii. 20.

‡ Rom. vi. 11.

from the Jewish law ; and as persons and things were purified, or set apart, under that law, sometimes by dipping, and sometimes by sprinkling ; so the apostles performed this ceremonial purification in the Christian Church, sometimes in one form, and sometimes in the other ; as the circumstances of time, place, persons—required.

“ I will now briefly review, and sum up,” my “ evidence—That the word βαπτίζω, *to baptize*, does not necessarily, nor constantly, signify *to dip* ; but is very frequently, if not generally, used in sacred writ in a more large and extensive sense : and signifies an application of water by *sprinkling* or *pouring* ; has been evidently shewn, and as the whole learned world (an antipædobaptist or two, perhaps, excepted) readily acknowledged. (See a cloud of witnesses from lexicographers, divines, grammarians—in Walker’s *Doctrine of Baptism*.)

“ Viewing the matter with the eye of impartial reason, *pouring water on the body*, as effectually and fully answers all the moral ends of baptism, as *dipping into it* ; yea, is much more significative of one principal thing intended to be represented or signified by this Christian rite, namely, *the giving us the Holy Spirit*, that *unction from above*, which is poured down upon us.

“ Nor ought it to be overlooked, that, upon this scheme of our brethren, there are two parts of the character of an *able minister of the New Testament*, which St. Paul, in his epistles both to Timothy and Titus, entirely omits ; yea, which neither himself, nor his beloved Timothy, seem to have possessed ; viz. hardness of constitution, and bodily strength. Without a good degree of these, in a variety of cases which must frequently occur, it will be rash and highly criminal for a Christian minister to give this sacred rite of religion to some of the most worthy and capable subjects ; inasmuch, as he cannot do it without apparent hazard, not only to his own life, but to that also of the baptized.

“ *Should immersion be allowed to have been the only ancient, apostolic, and scriptural mode of baptizing, yet a strict adherence to it, is not obligatory on us ; but this circum-*

stance *may very lawfully and fitly be exchanged for that of sprinkling or pouring.*

“To be satisfied of this, we need but consider—what is the true spirit and design of Christianity ; which the apostle calls, a *law of liberty* ;* that a great part of its intention was, to take off men’s regard from things ritual and ceremonial. It is a *doctrine according to godliness*:

“To imagine, therefore, that our Lord intended, absolutely and immutably, to bind down his followers, of all nations, and of all ages, to the Jewish form of baptizing,—supposing it to have been by dipping only,—is quite repugnant to that mild, that generous, and free spirit which his religion every where breathes :—and here it is natural to observe,

“That even under the Jewish, which was confessedly a weak and ceremonial dispensation, and which laid infinitely more weight upon ritual observances than the Christian religion does, a liberty was given to human prudence to dispense with some of the most express and most solemn institutions, in cases where only mercy or great convenience required it.

“Thus the rite of circumcision, though enjoined under the awful penalty to the neglected of being cut off,† was yet, without offence, laid aside, for the space of forty years,‡ and upon no other ground, as far as appears, but because the frequent and uncertain decampments, marches, and wars of the Israelites, in their passage through the wilderness, rendered it inconvenient and troublesome to be observed.

“So, by an express command, none but the priests were to eat of the *hallowed* or *shew bread* ;§ yet David and his men, when no other supply could conveniently be had, violated this injunction—they eat of that bread, which it was not *lawful for them* to eat, and are justified by Christ. ||

“So also, the *brazen serpent*, which was set up by the command of God ; honoured by many great and miraculous cures ; and designed, probably, to be an instructive memorial to future ages (which is the very nature of a rite or sacra-

* James i. 25. † Josh. v. 5. ‡ Gen. xvii. 14. § Lev. xxiv. 5—9.

|| Matt. xii. 4.

ment in the Christian church), was yet, when abused to superstition, broken down by Hezekiah, and actually destroyed.*

“Now, if under the Jewish ceremonial and weakly dispensation, such liberty was indulged to human prudence and convenience, as to dispense with and set aside its ritual injunctions; and this, when they were enjoined under so awful and severe a penalty; how absurd is it to imagine, that our divine lawgiver Jesus Christ has, under his infinitely more free and spiritual dispensation (under which our state is as much freer than that of the Jews, as the state of sons is than that of servants; or of friends, than that of slaves), tied us up to a strict and invariable exactness, as to merely ritual observances; and that no considerations of decency, health, convenience, or mercy, ought now to substitute the form of sprinkling the baptismal water, instead of a total immersion into it?

“Total immersions are, in this country and age, an unusual, a troublesome, a scarcely modest and decent, and in many cases a cruel and a very dangerous thing—especially, as the form of pouring is every whit as significative as that of dipping can be.

“Our Divine Legislator hath taught us to reason thus—When the strict observance of a merely ritual command will be attended with danger and great inconvenience to the disciples, it may lawfully be waived; or thus—*Baptism* was made for *man*, and not *man* for *baptism*. If, therefore, through any change of national custom, or of climate, the form of dipping in baptism should become odd and unbecoming, hazardous to the health, or troublesome to the disciples, it might then innocently be waived, and a form less burthen-some and disagreeable be substituted in its room.

“And here I” may “ask—Whether a strict adherence to dipping the baptized, would not, probably, be attended with as much danger and inconvenience to the bodies of the disciples now; as a strict observance of the sabbatical rest would have been to the twelve apostles, when going through

* Numb. xxi. 8, 9; 2 Kings xviii. 4.

the field of corn? In other words—Whether it be not as much mercy to excuse some at least (viz. new born infants, weakly and unhealthy persons, and even all others throughout the winter season, in these northern and cold climates), from being totally plunged in baptism; as it was to excuse the twelve for plucking and rubbing the corn on the sabbath day.

“It enters into the nature of things ritual and circumstantial, to be mutable, transient, and liable to be changed. As they are often but an adoption of some national custom (which is apparently the case as to the institution of baptism), or, an accommodation of a common usage to some purpose in religion: so they are alterable in their nature; and are themselves in some measure to be accommodated to prevailing customs and tastes; to the several countries, climates, and tempers of mankind.

“To conclude:—If after” this my evidence, “any still think it their indispensable duty to baptize by immersion only, let them, by all means, thus baptize; but then, we beseech them to forbear all severe censures of those who are not dipt. Let them not represent us as persons unbaptized—withdraw from our churches—refuse communion with us, at the common table of our Lord, upon so trifling a difference. This, surely, were to dishonour our sacred religion; and too naturally brings not only Christian baptism, but Christianity itself, into manifest contempt.

“Let us therefore, according to the apostolic precept—*receive one another, but not to doubtful disputations.*—To maintain an *unity of spirit*, by mutual forbearance, and to live together in perfect charity, is a matter of infinitely more importance, than the quantity of water, or the manner of its application, with which a person is baptized. ‘For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.’ ‘And the end of the commandment is charity; out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.’

NINTH WITNESS.

I, the NINTH WITNESS, shall endeavour “to follow a course of plain and close argument,” while giving my testimony on the subject now before the Court. “It shall be my sincere aim to discuss it with fairness and candour; and honestly, but in the spirit of ‘The Truth,’ to exhibit what I believe to be the sense of the Holy Scriptures, to whose authority I trust I shall unreservedly subject all my opinions.

“Baptism we have called a federal transaction; an initiation into, an acceptance of, the covenant of grace, required of us by Christ as a visible expression and act of that faith in Him, which He has made a condition of that salvation. It is a point, however, of so much importance to establish the covenant character of this ordinance, and so much of the controversy as to the proper subject of baptism depends upon it, that we may consider it somewhat at large.

“The Church of Christ, in its largest sense, consists of all who have been baptized in the name of Christ, and who thereby make a visible profession of faith in his divine mission, and in all the doctrines taught by him and his inspired Apostles. In a stricter sense, it consists of those who are virtually united to Christ, as the members of the body to the head; and who, being thus imbued with spiritual life, walk no longer ‘after the flesh, but after the Spirit.’ It is obligatory on all who are convinced of the truth of Christianity to be baptized; and upon all thus baptized frequently to partake of the Lord’s Supper, in order to testify their continued faith in that great and distinguishing doctrine of the religion of Christ, the redemption of the world by the sacrificial effusion of his blood; both of which suppose union with his church. If baptism be the door of admission into

the church, some must judge of the fitness of candidates, and administrators of the rite must be appointed:—and since this institution has the authority of Christ and his apostles, it is no more a matter of mere option with Christians whether they will be subject to government in the church, than it is optional with them to confess Christ by becoming its members.

“ The church is a society founded upon faith, and united by mutual love, for the personal edification of its members in holiness, and for the religious benefit of the world. It cannot employ force—the only door of the church is faith, to which there can be no compulsion; ‘ he that believeth and is baptized ’ becomes a member. They are to seek the intimacy of friendly society among themselves, and, except in the ordinary and courteous intercourse of life, they are bound to keep themselves separate from the world; they are enjoined to do good unto all men, but, ‘ specially to them that are of the household of faith; ’ and they are forbidden ‘ to eat ’ at the Lord’s table with immoral persons, that is, with those who, although they continue their Christian profession, dishonour it by their practice.—Baptism is to be administered; but the manner of this service may be prescribed by a church, since the Scriptures have not determined it.

“ By circumcision the Jews received the seal of the covenant, and were brought under the obligation of the whole law; they were made by it debtors to it; and when by their sins they had provoked God’s wrath, they were reconciled to him by their sacrifices, with which atonement was made, and so their sins were forgiven them.—Now, in the new dispensation, though our Saviour has eased us of that *law of ordinances*, that *grievous yoke*, and those *beggarly elements*, which were laid upon the Jews; yet since we are still in the body subject to our senses, and to sensible things, he has appointed some federal actions, to be both the visible stipulations and professions of our Christianity, and the conveyancers to us of the blessings of the gospel. And the saving

benefits of the covenant of grace are made expressly to depend upon a true faith.

“The *obligation* of baptism rests upon the example of our Lord, who, by his disciples, baptized many that by his discourses and miracles were brought to profess faith in him as the Messiah;—upon his solemn command to his apostles after his resurrection, ‘Go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:’—and upon the practice of the apostles themselves, who thus shewed that they” understood what baptism meant. “Thus St. Peter, in his sermon upon the day of Pentecost, exhorts, ‘Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the Holy Ghost.’

“Several passages of Scripture, and the very nature of the ordinance of baptism, will, however, shew that baptism is to the new covenant what circumcision was to the old, and took its place by the APPOINTMENT of Christ. This may be argued from our Lord’s commission to his apostles, ‘Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father,’ &c. ‘teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.’* ‘Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.’† By what means, therefore, were ‘all nations’ now to be brought into the church of God?—Plainly, by baptizing them that believed the ‘good news,’ and accepted the terms of the new covenant. This is apparent from the very words; and thus was baptism expressly made the initiatory rite by which believers of ‘all nations’ were to be introduced into the church and covenant of grace; an office in which it manifestly took the place of circumcision, which heretofore, even from the time of Abraham, had been the only initiatory rite into the same covenant. Moses re-enacted circumcision; our Lord not only does *not* re-enact it, but, on the contrary, he appoints *another* mode of entrance into the covenant in its new and

* Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

† Mark xvi. 15, 16.

perfected form, and that so expressly as to amount to a formal abrogation of the ancient sign, and the putting of baptism in its place. The same argument may be maintained, from the words of our Lord to Nicodemus, 'Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.' If then he declares that no one can 'enter' into that church but by being 'born of water and of the Holy Spirit,' which heavenly gift followed upon baptism when received in true faith, he clearly makes baptism the mode of initiation into his church, in this passage as in the last quoted; and in both he assigns to it the same office as circumcision in the church of the Old Testament, whether in its patriarchal or Mosaic form.

"A further proof that baptism has precisely the same federal and initiatory character as circumcision, and that it was instituted for the same ends, and in its place, is found in Colossians ii. 10—12. Here baptism is also made the initiatory rite of the new dispensation, that by which the Colossians were joined to Christ, *in* whom they are said to be *complete*; and so certain is it that baptism has the same office and import now as circumcision formerly,—with this difference only, that the object of faith was then future, and now it is Christ *as come*,—that the apostle expressly calls baptism '*the circumcision of Christ*,' the circumcision instituted by him; which phrase he puts out of the reach of frivolous criticism, by adding, exegetically,—'buried with him *in baptism*;' for unless the apostle here calls baptism the 'circumcision of Christ,' he asserts that we 'put off the body of the sins of the flesh,' that is become new creatures by virtue of our Lord's own personal circumcision; but if this be absurd, then the only reason for which he can call baptism the 'circumcision of Christ' or Christian circumcision, is, that it has taken the place of the Abrahamic circumcision, and fulfils the same office of introducing believing men into God's covenant, and entitling them to the enjoyment of spiritual blessings.

"But let us quote Galatians iii. 27—29; 'For as many of you as have been baptized *into* Christ, have put on Christ;

there is neither Jew nor Gentile, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus ;' 'and if ye are Christ's,' by being thus '*baptized*,' and by '*putting on*' Christ, 'then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.'

"The argument here is also decisive ; it cannot be denied that it was by circumcision, believingly submitted to, that 'strangers' or heathens, as well as Jews, became the spiritual 'seed of Abraham,' and 'heirs' of the same spiritual and heavenly 'promises.' But the same office in this passage is ascribed to baptism, also believingly submitted to ; and the conclusion therefore is inevitable.—It was thus that the Abrahamic covenant was offered to the acceptance of all who heard it, and thus that they were to declare their acceptance of it. In the same manner, there is a standing offer of the same covenant of mercy wherever the gospel is preached. The 'good news' which it contains is that of a promise, an engagement, a covenant on the part of God to remit sin, and to save all that believe in Christ. To the covenant in this new form he also requires a visible and formal act of acceptance, which act, when expressive of the required faith, makes us parties to the covenant, and entitles us, through the faithfulness of God, to its benefits. 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved ;' or, as in the passage before us, 'As many of you as have been *baptized* into Christ, have put on Christ ; and if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.'

"Noah building of the ark, and entering into it with his family, are therefore considered by St. Paul as the visible expression of his faith in the ancient promises of God respecting Messiah ; and for this reason, baptism is called by St. Peter, without any allegory at all, but in the sobriety of fact, 'the *antitype*' of this transaction ; the one exactly answering to the other, as an external expression of faith in the same objects and the same promises.

"But the apostle does not rest in this general representation. He proceeds to express, in a particular and most forcible manner, the nature of Christian baptism,—'not the

putting away of the filth of the flesh ; but the answer of a good conscience towards God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.' The meaning of the apostle is, that baptism is not the putting away the filth of the flesh, not a mere external ceremony ; but a rite which *demand*s or *require*s something of us, in order to the attainment of a 'good conscience.' What that is, we learn from the words of our Lord—it is faith in Christ ; 'He that *believeth* and is baptized shall be saved ;' which faith is the reliance of a penitent upon the atonement of the Saviour, who thus submits with all gratitude and truth to the terms of the evangelical covenant. And we know, from the instance of Philip and the Eunuch, that there was an explicit *requirement of faith*, and as explicit an answer or confession ; 'and Philip said, If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest ; and he answered, I believe that Jesus is the Son of God.' Every administration of baptism indeed implied this demand. We see how St. Peter preserves the correspondence between the act of Noah in preparing the ark, as an act of faith by which he was justified, and the act of submitting to Christian baptism, which is also obviously an act of faith, in order to the remission of sins, or the obtaining a good conscience before God. This is further strengthened by his immediately adding, 'by the resurrection of Jesus Christ :' a clause which our translators, by the use of a parenthesis, connect with 'baptism doth also now save us ;' so that their meaning is, we are saved by baptism through the resurrection of Jesus Christ ; and as he 'rose again for our justification,' this sufficiently shews the true sense of the apostle, who, by our being 'saved,' clearly means our being justified, by faith."

"The text, however, needs no parenthesis, and the true sense may thus be expressed. "The antitype to which water of the flood, baptism, doth now save us, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but that which intently seeks a good conscience towards God, through faith in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. But the whole passage can only be consistently taken to teach us that baptism is the outward sign of our entrance into God's covenant of mercy,

and that, when it is an act of true faith, it becomes an instrument of salvation; like that act of faith in Noah, by which, when, moved with fear, he 'prepared an ark to the saving of his house,' and survived the destruction of an unbelieving world.

"From what has been said, it will then follow, that the Abrahamic covenant and the Christian covenant is the same gracious engagement on the part of God to show mercy to man, and to bestow upon him eternal life, through faith in Christ as the true sacrifice for sin, differing only in circumstances; and that as the sign and seal of this covenant, under the old dispensation, was circumcision, under the new it is baptism, which has the same federal character, performs the same initiatory office, and is instituted by the same authority. For none could have authority to lay aside the appointed seal, but the Being who first instituted it, who changed the form of the covenant itself, and who has in fact abrogated the old seal by the appointment of another, even baptism, which is made obligatory upon 'all nations to whom the gospel is preached, and is' to continue to 'the end of the world.'

"This argument is sufficiently extended to show that the" defendants "have in vain endeavoured to prove that baptism has not been appointed in the room of circumcision; a point on which, indeed, they are bound to employ all their strength; for, the substitution of baptism for circumcision being established, one of their main objections to infant baptism, as I shall just now show, is rendered wholly nugatory; as baptism, both as a *sign* and *seal*, presents an entire correspondence with the ancient rite of circumcision.

"As A SIGN; under this view, circumcision indicated, by a visible and continued rite, the *placability* of God towards his sinful creatures; and held out the promise of justification, by faith alone, to every truly penitent offender. It went further, and was the sign of sanctification, or the taking away the pollution of sin—as well as the pardon of actual offences, and thus was the visible emblem of a regenerate mind, and a renewed life. This will appear from the fol-

lowing passages: 'For he is not a Jew which is one outwardly in the flesh; but he is a Jew which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in *the spirit*, and not in *the letter*, whose praise is not of men, but of God.* 'And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live.† 'Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and take away the foreskins of your heart, ye men of Judah, and inhabitants of Jerusalem.‡ It was a *sign* also of peculiar relation to God, as his people. 'Only the Lord had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you above all people, as it is this day. Circumcise, THEREFORE, the foreskin of your hearts, and be no more stiff-necked.§

"In all these respects, baptism, as a *sign* of the new covenant, corresponds to circumcision. Like that, its administration is a constant exhibition of the placability of God to man; like that, it is the initiatory rite into a covenant which promises pardon and salvation to a true faith, of which it is the outward profession; like that, it is the symbol of regeneration, the washing away of sin, and 'the renewing of the Holy Ghost;' and like that, it is a sign of peculiar relation to God, Christians becoming, in consequence, 'a chosen generation, a peculiar people,'—his '*church*' on earth, as distinguished from 'the world.' 'For we,' says the apostle, 'are the circumcision,' we are that peculiar people and church now, which was formerly distinguished by the sign of circumcision.

"But as a *sign*, baptism is more than circumcision; because the covenant, under its new dispensation, was not only to offer pardon upon believing, deliverance from the bondage of fleshly appetites, and a peculiar spiritual relation to God, all which we find under the Old Testament; but also to bestow the *Holy Spirit*, in his FULLNESS, upon all believers; and of this effusion of 'the power from on high,' baptism was made the visible sign; and perhaps for this, among some other obvious reasons, was substituted for circumcision, because

* Rom. ii. 28.

† Deut. xxx. 6.

‡ Jer. iv. 3.

§ Deut. x. 15, 16.

baptism *by effusion* or *pouring* (the New Testament mode of baptizing, as we shall afterwards show) was a natural symbol of this heavenly gift. The baptism of John had special reference to the Holy Spirit, which was not to be administered by him, but by Christ, which should come after him. This gift only honoured John's baptism once, in the extraordinary case of our Lord, but it constantly followed upon the baptism administered by the apostles of Christ, after his ascension, and the 'sending of the promise of the Father.' 'Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, for the remission of your sins, and *ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.*' Of this great new covenant blessing, baptism was therefore eminently the *sign*; and it represented 'the *pouring out*' of the Spirit, the '*descending*' of the Spirit, the '*falling*' of the Spirit 'upon men,' by the mode in which it was administered, the *POURING* of water FROM ABOVE upon the subjects baptized.

"As a *seal* also, or *confirming* sign, baptism answers to circumcision. By the institution of the latter, a *PLEDGE* was constantly given by the Almighty to bestow the spiritual blessings of which the rite was the sign, pardon and sanctification through faith in the future Seed of Abraham. Baptism is also the pledge of the same blessings, along with the higher dispensation of the Holy Spirit, which it specially represents in emblem. Thus in baptism there is, on the part of God, a visible assurance of his faithfulness to his covenant stipulations. But it is *our seal* also; it is that act by which we make ourselves *parties* to the covenant, and thus 'set to our seal that God is true.' In this respect it binds us, as, in the other, God mercifully binds himself for the stronger assurance of our faith. We *pledge* ourselves to trust wholly in Christ for pardon and salvation, and to obey his laws;—'teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.' In that rite also we undergo a mystical death unto sin; a mystical separation from the world, which St. Paul calls being '*buried with Christ, in or by baptism;*' and a mystical resurrection to newness of life, through Christ's resurrection from the dead.

"If, then, we bring all these considerations under our view, we shall find it sufficiently established that baptism is the sign and seal of the covenant of grace under its perfected dispensation;—that it is the grand initiatory act by which we enter into this covenant, in order to claim all its spiritual blessings, and to take upon ourselves all its obligations;—that it was appointed by Jesus Christ, in a manner which plainly put it in the place of circumcision;—that it is now the means by which men become Abraham's spiritual children, and heirs with him of the promise, which was the office of circumcision, until the 'Seed,' the Messiah, should come;—and that baptism is therefore expressly called by St. Paul 'the circumcision of Christ,' or Christian circumcision, in a sense which can only import that baptism has now taken the place of the Abrahamic rite.

"Accordingly we find that baptism was formally made the right of initiation into this covenant for the first time, when our Lord gave commission to his disciples to 'go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,'—'he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved.' John's baptism was upon profession of repentance, and faith in the speedy appearance of Him who was to baptize with the Holy Ghost and fire; and our Lord's baptism, by his disciples, was administered to those Jews that believed on him as the Messias, all of whom, like the apostles, waited for a fuller development of his character and offices. For, since the new covenant was not then fully perfected, it could not be proposed in any other way than to prepare them that believed in Christ, by its partial but increasing manifestation in the discourses of our Lord, for the full declaration both of its benefits and obligations; which declaration was not made until after his resurrection.

"That believers are the proper subjects of baptism, as they were of circumcision, is beyond dispute. As it would have been a monstrous perversion of circumcision to have administered it to any person, being of adult age, who did not believe in the true and living God, and in the expected

‘Seed of Abraham,’ in whom all nations were to be blessed ; so is faith in Christ also an indispensable condition for baptism in all persons of mature age : and no minister is at liberty to take from the candidate the visible pledge of his acceptance of the terms of God’s covenant, unless he has been first taught its nature, promises, and obligations, and gives sufficient evidence of the reality of his faith, and the sincerity of his profession of obedience. Hence the administration of baptism was placed by our Lord only in the hands of those who were ‘to preach the gospel,’ that is, of those who were to declare God’s method of saving men through faith in Christ, and to teach them ‘to observe all things whatsoever Christ had commanded them.’ Circumcision was connected with teaching and belief of the truth taught, and so also is Christian baptism.

“The question, however,” which I now come here to prove, “is, whether the infant children of believing parents are entitled to be made parties to the covenant of grace, by the act of their parents, and the administration of baptism ?

“In favour of infant baptism, the following arguments may be adduced. Some of them are more direct than others ; but” the Court “will judge whether, taken altogether, they do not establish this practice of the church, continued to us from the earliest ages, upon the strongest bases of SCRIPTURAL AUTHORITY.

“As it has been established that baptism was put by our Lord himself and his apostles in the room of circumcision, as an initiatory rite into the covenant of grace ; and as the infant children of believers under the Old Testament were entitled to the covenant benefits of the latter ordinance, and the children of Christian believers are not expressly excluded from entering into the same covenant by baptism ; the absence of such an explicit exclusion is sufficient proof of their title to baptism.

“For if the covenant be the same in all its spiritual blessings, and an express change was made by our Lord in the *sign* and *seal* of that covenant, but no change at all in the *subjects* of it, no one can have a right to carry that

change further than the Lawgiver himself, and to exclude the children of believers from entering his covenant by baptism, when they had always been entitled to enter into it by circumcision. This is a censurable interference with the authority of God; a presumptuous attempt to fashion the new dispensation, in this respect, so as to conform it to a mere human opinion of fitness and propriety. For to say, that because baptism is directed to be administered to believers when adults are spoken of, it follows that children who are not capable of personal faith are excluded from baptism, is only to argue in the same manner as if it were contended, that because circumcision, when adults were the only subjects, was only to be administered to believers, therefore infants were excluded from that ordinance; which is contrary to the fact. This argument will not certainly exclude them from baptism by way of inference, and by no act of the Maker and Mediator of the covenant are they shut out.

“ If it had been intended to exclude infants from entering into the new covenant by baptism, the absence of every prohibitory expression to this effect in the New Testament, must have been misleading to all men, and especially to the Jewish believers.

“ Baptism was no new ordinance when our Lord instituted it, though he gave to it a particular designation. It was in his practice to adapt, in several instances, what he found already established to the uses of his religion. A parable, for instance, was a Jewish mode of teaching. Who taught by parables equal to Jesus Christ? And what is the most distinguished and appropriate rite of his religion, but a service grafted on a passover custom among the Jews of his day? It was not ordained by Moses that a part of the bread they had used in the passover should be the last thing they ate after that supper, yet this our Lord took as he found it, and converted it into a memorial of his body. The ‘cup of blessing’ has no authority whatever from the original institution, yet this our Lord found in use, and adopted as a memorial of his blood: taken together, these elements form

one commemoration of his death. Probability, arising to rational certainty, therefore, would lead us to infer, that whatever rite Jesus appointed as the ordinance of admission into the community of his followers, he would also adopt from some service already existing—from some token familiar among the people of his nation.

“In fact, we know that ‘*divers baptisms*’ existed under the law, and we have every reason to believe that the admission of proselytes into the profession of Judaism was really and truly marked by a *washing* with water in a ritual and ceremonial manner. I have always understood that Maimonides is perfectly correct, when he says, ‘*In all ages when a heathen (or a stranger by nation) was willing to enter into the covenant of Israel, and gather himself under the wings of the majesty of God, and take upon himself the yoke of the law—he must be first circumcised, and secondly, BAPTIZED, and thirdly, bring a sacrifice; or if the party were a woman, then she must be first BAPTIZED, and secondly, bring a sacrifice.*’ He adds, ‘*at this present time (the temple being destroyed) there is no sacrificing, a stranger must be first circumcised, and secondly BAPTIZED.*’ Doctor Gill has ventured the assertion, that ‘there is no mention made of any rite or custom of admitting Jewish proselytes by *baptism* in any writings or records before the time of John the Baptist, Christ, and his apostles, nor in any age after them for the first three or four hundred years, or, however, before the writings of the Talmuds.’ But the learned doctor has not condescended to understand the evidence of this fact. It does not rest on the testimony of Jewish records solely; it was in circulation among the heathen, as we learn from the clear and demonstrative testimony of Epictetus.

“Those who could think that the Jews could institute *proselyte baptism*, at the very moment when the Christians were practising *baptism* as an initiatory rite, are not to be envied for the correctness of their judgment. I see no reason for disputing the assertion of Maimonides, notwithstanding Doctor Gill’s rash and fallacious language on the subject.”

“This baptism of proselytes, as Lightfoot has fully

shewed, was a baptism of *families*, and comprehended their infant children; and the rite was a symbol of their being washed from the pollution of idolatry. Very different indeed, in the extent of its import and office, was Christian baptism to the Jewish baptisms; nevertheless, this shews that the Jews were familiar with the rite as it extended to children, in cases of conversions from idolatry; and, as far at least as the converts from paganism to Christianity were concerned, they could not but understand Christian baptism to extend to the infant children of gentile proselytes, unless there had been, what we nowhere find in the discourses of Christ, and the writings of the apostles, *an express exception of them*. In like manner, their own practice of infant circumcision must have misled them; for if they were taught that baptism was the initiatory seal of the Christian covenant, and had taken the place of circumcision, which St. Paul had informed them was ‘a seal of the righteousness which is by faith,’ how should they have understood that their children were no longer to be taken into covenant with God, as under their own former religion, unless they had been told that this exclusion of children from all covenant relation to God was one of those *peculiarities* of the Christian dispensation, in which it differed from the religion of the patriarchs and Moses? This was surely a great change, a change which must have made great impression upon a serious and affectionate Jewish parent, who could now no longer covenant with God for his children, or place his children in a special covenant relation to the Lord of the whole earth; a change indeed so great,—a placing of the children of Christian parents in so inferior, and, so to speak, *outcast* a condition, in comparison of the children of believing Jews, whilst the Abrahamic covenant remained in force,—that not only, in order to prevent mistake, did it require an express enunciation, but in the nature of the thing it must have given rise to so many objections, or at least inquiries, that explanations of the reason of this peculiarity might naturally be expected to occur in the writings of the apostles, and especially in those of St. Paul. On the contrary,

the very phraseology of these inspired men, when touching the subject of the children of believers only incidentally, was calculated to confirm the ancient practice, in opposition to what we are told is the true doctrine of the gospel upon this point. For instance : how could the Jews have understood the words of Peter at the Pentecost, but as calling both upon them and their children to be baptized ?—‘ Repent and be baptized, for the promise is unto you and to your children :’ for that both are included may be proved, says a sensible writer, by considering,

“1. The resemblance between this promise, and that in Gen. xvii. 7, ‘To be a God unto thee, and unto thy seed after thee.’—The resemblance between these two lies in two things : each stands connected with an ordinance, by which persons were to be admitted into church fellowship ; the one by circumcision, the other by baptism. Both agree in phraseology ; the one is ‘to thee and to thy seed,’ the other is to ‘you and to your children.’ Now every one knows that the word *seed* means children ; and that *children* means *seed* ; and that they are precisely the same. From these two strongly resembling features, viz. their connexion with a similar ordinance, and the sameness of the phraseology, I infer that the subjects expressed in each are the very same. And as it is certain that parents and infants were intended by the one ; it must be equally certain that both are intended by the other.

“2. In order to know the sense in which the speaker must have understood the sentence in question,—‘the promise is to you and to your children,’—we must consider who the speaker was, and from what source he received his religious knowledge. The apostle was a Jew. He knew, that he himself had been admitted in infancy, and that it was the ordinary practice of the church to admit infants to membership. And he likewise knew, that in this they acted on the authority of that place, where God promises to Abraham ‘to be a God unto him and unto his seed.’ Now, if the apostle knew all this, in what sense could he understand the term *children* as distinguished from the parents ? I have

said that children and seed mean the same thing. And as the apostle well knew that the term *seed* intended infants, though not mere infants only, and that infants were circumcised and received into the church as being the seed, what else could he understand by the term *children*, when mentioned with their parents? Those who will have the apostle to mean, by the term *children*, adult posterity only, have this infelicity attending them, that they understand the term differently from all other men; and they attribute to the apostle a sense of the word, which to him must have been the most forced and unfamiliar.

“3. In what sense his hearers must have understood him, when he said, ‘the promise is to you and your children.’

“The context informs us that many of St. Peter’s hearers, as he himself was, were Jews. They had been accustomed for many hundred years to receive infants by circumcision into the church; and this they did, as before observed, because God had promised to be a God to Abraham and to his seed. They had understood this promise to mean parents and their infant offspring, and this idea was become familiar by the practice of many centuries. What then must have been their views, when one of their own community says to them, The promise is to you and to your children? If their practice of receiving infants were founded on a promise exactly similar, as it was, how could they possibly understand him, but as meaning the same thing, since he himself used the same mode of speech. This must have been the case, unless we admit this absurdity, that they understood him in a sense to which they had never been accustomed. How idle a thing it is in a Baptist to come, with a lexicon in his hand, to inform us that τέκνα, children, means posterity! Certainly it does, and so includes the youngest infants.

“But the” defendants “will have it that τέκνα, children, in this place, means only *adult posterity*. And if so, the Jews to whom he spoke, unless they understood St. Peter in a way in which it was morally impossible they should, would infallibly have understood him wrong. Certainly, all men, when acting freely, will understand words in that way

which is most familiar to them ; and nothing could be more so to the Jews, than to understand such a speech as St. Peter's to mean adults and infants.

"To this I may add, that St. Paul calls the children of believers *holy*, separated to God, and standing therefore in a peculiar relation to him ;* a mode of speech which would also have been wholly unintelligible, at least to a Jew, unless by some rite of Christianity children were made sharers in its covenanted mercies.

"Infant children are DECLARED BY CHRIST to be members of his church.

"That they were made members of God's church in the family of Abraham, and among the Jews, cannot be denied. They were made so by circumcision, which was not that carnal and merely political rite which many Baptist writers, in contradiction to the Scriptures, make it, but was, as we have seen, the seal of a spiritual covenant, comprehending engagements to bestow *the remission* of sins, and all its consequent blessings in this life, and in another the heavenly Canaan. Among these blessings was that special relation which consisted in becoming a visible and peculiar people of God, his *church*. This was contained in that engagement of the covenant, 'I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people ;' a promise, which however connected with temporal advantages, was in its highest and most emphatic sense wholly spiritual. Circumcision was therefore a *religious*, and not a mere political rite, because the covenant, of which it was the seal, was in its most ample sense spiritual. If therefore we had no direct authority from the words of Christ to declare the infant children of believers *competent* to become the members of his church, the two circumstances, —that the church of God, which has always been one church in all ages, and into which the Gentiles are now introduced, formerly admitted infants to membership by circumcision,—and that the *mode* of initiation into it only has been changed, and not the *subjects* (of which we have no intimation),—would themselves prove that baptism admits

* 1 Cor. vii. 14.

into the Christian church both believing parents and their children, as circumcision admitted both. The same church remains; for 'the olive tree' is not destroyed; the natural branches only are broken off, and the gentiles grafted in, and 'partake of the root and fatness of the olive tree,' that is, of all the spiritual blessings and privileges heretofore enjoyed by the Jews, in consequence of their relation to God as his church. But among these spiritual privileges and blessings, was the right of placing their children in covenant with God; the membership of the Jews comprehended both children and adults; and the grafting in of the gentiles, so as to partake of the same 'root and fatness,' will therefore include a right to put their children also into the covenant, so that they, as well as adults, may become members of Christ's church, have God to be 'their God,' and be acknowledged by him, in the special sense of the terms of the covenant, to be 'his people.'

"But we have our Lord's direct testimony to this point, and that in two remarkable passages; 'And Jesus took a child and set him by him, and he said unto them, Whosoever shall receive this child in my name, receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth him that sent me; for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great.'* We grant this is an instance of teaching by parabolic action. The intention of Christ was to impress the necessity of humility and teachableness upon his disciples, and to afford a promise, to those who should receive them in his name, of that special grace which was implied in receiving himself. But then, were there not a correspondence of circumstances between the child taken by Jesus in his arms, and the disciples compared to this child, there would be no force, no propriety, in the action, and the same truth might have been as forcibly stated without any action of this kind at all. Let then these correspondences be remarked, in order to estimate the amount of their meaning. The humility and docility of the true disciple corresponded with the same dispositions in a young child; and the 'receiving a disciple in the *name*'

* Luke ix. 47, 48.

of Christ corresponds with the receiving of a child in *the name* of Christ, which can only mean the receiving of each with kindness on account of a *religious relation* between each and Christ, which religious relation can only be well interpreted of a *church relation*. This is further confirmed by the next point of correspondence, the *identity* of Christ both with the disciple and the child—‘Whosoever shall receive this child in my name receiveth me;’ but such an identity of Christ with his disciples stands wholly upon their relation to him as members of his mystical ‘body, the church.’ It is in this respect only that they are ‘one with him;’ and there can be no identity of Christ with ‘little children,’ but by virtue of the same relation, that is, as they are *members* of his mystical body, the church; of which *membership*, baptism is now, as circumcision was then, the initiatory rite. That was the relation in which the very child he then took up in his arms stood to him by virtue of its circumcision; it was a member of his Old Testament church; but, as he is speaking of the disciples as the future teachers of his perfected covenant, and their reception in his name under that character, he manifestly glances at the church relationship of children to him, to be established by the baptism to be instituted in his perfect dispensation.

“This is, however, expressed still more explicitly in Mark x. 14. Here the children spoken of are ‘little children,’ of so tender an age, that our Lord ‘took them up in his arms.’ The purpose for which they were brought was not, as some of the ” defendants “would suggest, that Christ should heal them of diseases; for though St. Mark says, ‘They brought young children to Christ that he might *touch* them,’ this is explained by St. Matthew, who says, ‘that he should put his hands upon them and pray;’ and even in the statement of St. Mark (x. 16,) it is not said that our Lord healed them, but ‘put his hands upon them, and *blessed* them,’ which clearly enough shows that this was the purpose for which they were brought by their parents to Christ.’ Nor is there any evidence that it was the practice among the Jews for common, unofficial persons to put their

hands upon the heads of those for whom they prayed. The parents here appear to have been among those who believed Christ to be a prophet, '*that prophet*,' or the Messiah, and on that account earnestly desired his prayers for their children, and his *official* blessing upon them. That official blessing,—the blessing which he was authorised and empowered to bestow by virtue of his Messiaship,—he was so ready, we might say so anxious, to bestow upon them, that he was '*much displeased*' with his disciples, who 'rebuked them that brought them,' and gave a command which was to be in force in all future time,—'Suffer the little children to come unto me,' in order to receive my official blessing, 'for of such is the kingdom of God.' The first evasive criticism of the "defendants" "is, that the phrase 'of such' means of such like, that is, of adults being of a child-like disposition; a criticism which takes away all meaning from the words of our Lord. For what kind of reason was it to offer for permitting children to come to Christ to receive his blessing, that persons not children, but who were of a child-like disposition, were the subjects of the kingdom of God? The absurdity of this is its own refutation, since the reason for children being permitted to come must be found in themselves, and not in others. The second attempt to evade the argument from this passage is, to understand 'the kingdom of God,' or the 'kingdom of heaven,' as St. Matthew has it, exclusively of the heavenly state. We gladly admit, in opposition to the Calvinistic Baptists, that all children dying before actual sin committed are admitted into heaven through the merits of Christ; but for this very reason it follows that infants are proper subjects to be introduced into his church on earth. The phrases, the 'kingdom of God,' and 'the kingdom of heaven,' are, however, more frequently used by our Lord to denote the church in this present world, than in its state of glory; and since all the children brought to Christ to receive his blessing were not likely to die in their infancy, it could not be affirmed, 'that of such is the kingdom of heaven,' if that be understood to mean the state of future happiness exclusively. As children, they might all

be members of the church on earth, but not all *as children* members of the church in heaven, seeing they might live to become adult and be cut away. Thus, therefore, if children are expressly declared to be members of Christ's church, then are they proper subjects of baptism, which is the initiatory rite into every portion of that church which is visible.

“But let this case be more particularly considered. Take it that, by the ‘kingdom of God,’ or of ‘heaven,’ our Lord means the glorified state of his church; it must be granted that none can enter into heaven who are not redeemed by Christ, and who do not stand in a vital relation to him as members of his mystical body, or otherwise we should place human and fallen beings in that heavenly state who are unconnected with Christ as their Redeemer, and uncleansed by him as the Sanctifier of his redeemed. Now this relation must exist on earth before it can exist in heaven, or else we assign the work of sanctifying the fallen nature of man to a future state, which is contrary to the Scriptures. If infants, therefore, are thus redeemed and sanctified in their nature, and are before death made ‘meet for the inheritance of the saints in light,’ so that in this world they are placed in the same relation to Christ as an adult believer, who derives sanctifying influence from him, they are therefore the members of his church—they partake of the grace of his covenant, and are comprehended in that promise of the covenant, ‘I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people.’ In other words, they are made members of Christ's church, and are entitled to be recognised as such by the administration of the visible sign of initiation into some visible branch of it. If it be asked, Of what import then is baptism to children, if as infants they already stand in a favourable relation to Christ? the answer is, that it is of the same import as circumcision was to Abraham, which was ‘a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised:’ it confirmed all the promises of the covenant of grace to him, and made the church of God *visible* to men. It is of the same import as baptism to the Eunuch, who had faith already, and a willingness to submit to the rite before

it was administered to him. He stood at that moment in the condition of an *accepted* candidate; he was *virtually* a member, although not *formally* so; and his baptism was not merely a sign of his faith, but a *confirming* sign of God's covenant relation to him as a pardoned and accepted man, and gave him a security for the continuance and increase of the grace of the covenant, as he was prepared to receive it. In like manner, in the case of all *truly believing* adults applying for baptism, their relation to Christ is not that of mere candidates for membership with his church, but that of *accepted* candidates, standing already in a vital relation to him, but about to receive the seal which was to confirm that grace, and its increase in the ordinance itself, and in future time. Thus this *previous* relation of infants to Christ, as accepted by him, is an argument for their baptism, not against it, seeing it is by that they are visibly recognised as the formal members of his church, and have the full grace of the covenant confirmed and sealed to them, with increase of grace as they are fitted to receive it; besides the advantage of visible connexion with the church, and of that obligation which is taken upon themselves by their parents to train them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

“In both views, then, ‘of such is the kingdom of God’—members of his church on earth, and of his church in heaven if *they die in infancy*, for the one is necessarily involved in the other. No one can be of the kingdom of God in heaven, who does not stand in a vital, sanctifying relation to Christ as the head of his mystical body, the church, on earth; and no one can be of the kingdom of God on earth, or member of his true church, and die in that relation, without entering that state of glory to which his adoption on earth makes him an heir, through Christ.

“The argument from apostolic practice next offers itself. That practice was to baptize the houses of them that believed.

“The impugnors of infant baptism are pleased to argue much from the absence of all express mention of the baptism of infants in the New Testament. This, however, is easily

accounted for, when it is considered, that if, as we have proved, baptism took the place of circumcision, the baptism of infants was so much a matter of course as to call for no remark. The argument from silence on this subject is one which least of all the "defendants" ought to dwell upon, since, as we have seen, if it had been intended to exclude children from the privilege of being placed in covenant with God, which privilege they unquestionably enjoyed under the Old Testament, this extraordinary alteration, which could not but produce remark, required to be particularly noted, both to account for it to the mind of an affectionate Jewish parent, and to guard against that mistake into which I shall just now show Christians from the earliest time fell, since they administered baptism to infants. It may further be observed, that, as to the Acts of the Apostles, the events narrated there did not require the express mention of the baptism of infants as an act separate from the baptism of adults. That which called for the administration of baptism at that period, as now when the gospel is preached in a heathen land, was the believing of adult persons, not the case of persons already believing bringing their children for baptism. On the supposition that baptism was administered to the children of the parents who thus believed, at the same time as themselves, and in consequence of their believing, it may be asked, how the fact could be more naturally expressed, when it was not intended to speak of infant baptism *doctrinally* or *distinctly*, than that such an one was baptized 'and all his house;' just as a similar fact would be distinctly recorded by a modern missionary, writing to a church at home practising infant baptism, and having no controversy on the subject in his eye, by saying he baptized such a heathen, at such a place, with all his *family*. For, without going into any criticism on the Greek term rendered *house*, it cannot be denied that, like the old English word employed in our translation, and also like the word *family*, it must be understood to comprehend either the children only, to the exclusion of the domestics, or both.

"If we take the instances of the baptism of whole 'houses,'

as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, they must be understood as marking the common mode of proceeding among the first preachers of the gospel when the head or heads of a family believed, or as insulated and peculiar instances. If the former, which, from what may be called the matter-of-course manner in which the cases are mentioned, is most probable, then innumerable instances must have occurred of the baptizing of houses or families, just as many, in fact, as there were of the conversion of heads of families in the apostolic age. That the majority of these houses must have included infant children is therefore certain, and it follows that the apostles practised infant baptism.

“But let the case of baptism of houses mentioned in the New Testament be put in the most favourable light for the purpose of the” defendants, “that is, let them be considered as insulated and peculiar, and not as *instances* of apostolic procedure in all cases where the heads of families were converted to the faith, still” they are “obliged to assume, that neither in the house of the Philippian jailer, nor in that of Lydia, nor in that of Stephanas, were there any infants at all, since, if there were, they were comprehended in the *whole* houses which were baptized upon the believing of their respective heads. This at least is improbable, and no intimation of this peculiarity is given in the history.

“The” defendants, “however, think that they can prove that all the persons included in these houses were adults; and that the means of shewing this from the Scriptures is an instance of ‘the care of Providence watching over the sacred cause of adult baptism;’ thus absurdly assuming that, even if this point could be made out, the whole controversy is terminated, when in fact this is but an auxiliary argument, of very inferior importance to those above mentioned. But let us examine their supposed proofs. ‘With respect to the jailer,’ they tell us, ‘that we are expressly assured that the apostles spake the word of the Lord to all that were in his house;’ which we grant must principally, although not of necessity exclusively, refer to those who were of sufficient age to understand their discourse. And ‘that he rejoiced,

believing in God with all his house;’ from which the inference is, that none but adult hearers, and adult believers, were in this case baptized. If so, then there could be no infant children in the house; which, as the jailer appears from his activity to have been a man in the vigour of life, and not aged, is at least far from being certain. But if it be a *proof* in this case that there were no infant children in the jailer’s family, that it is said he believed and *all his house*, this is not the only believing family mentioned in Scripture from which infants must be excluded. For, to say nothing of the house of Lydia and Stephanas, the nobleman at Capernaum is said to have believed, ‘and *all his house*.’* So that we are to conclude that there were no infant children in this house also, although his sick son is not said to be his only offspring, and that son is called by him a child, the diminutive term παιδίον being used. Again, Cornelius is said to be ‘one that feared God, and *all his house*.’† Infant children, therefore, must be excluded from his family also; and also from that of Crispus, who is said to have believed on the Lord with all his house; which *house* appears, from what immediately follows, to have been baptized. These instances make it much more probable that the phrases, ‘fearing God with all his house,’ and ‘believing with all his house,’ include young children under the believing adults, whose religious profession they would follow, and whose sentiments they would imbibe, so that they might be called a Christian family, than that so many houses or families should have been constituted only of adult persons, to the entire exclusion of children of tender years. In the case of the jailer’s house, however, the Baptist argument manifestly halts; for it is not said, that they only to whom the word of the Lord was spoken, were baptized; nor that they only who ‘believed,’ and ‘rejoiced,’ with the jailer, were baptized. The account of the baptism is given in a separate verse, and in different phrase; ‘And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and *all his*,’ all belonging to him,

* John iv. 53.

† Acts x. 2.

‘straightway;’ where there is no limitation of the persons who were baptized to the adults only, by any terms which designate them as persons ‘hearing,’ or ‘believing.’

“The next instance is that of Lydia. The words of the writer of the Acts are—‘who, when she was baptized, and her house.’ The great difficulty with the” defendants “is, to make a house for Lydia without any children at all, either young or old. This, however, cannot be proved from the term itself, since the same word is that commonly used in the Scripture to include children residing at home with their parents; ‘one that ruleth well his own *house*, having his *children* in subjection with all gravity.’ It is, however, conjectured, first, that she had come a trading voyage from Thyatira to Philippi, to sell purple; as if a woman of Thyatira might not be settled in business at Philippi as a seller of this article. Then, as if to mark more strikingly the hopelessness of the attempt to torture this passage to favour an opinion, ‘her house’ is made to consist of journeymen dyers, employed in preparing the purple she sold; which, however, is a notion at variance with the former; for, if she was on a mere trading voyage, if she had brought her purple goods from Thyatira to Philippi to sell, she most probably brought them ready dyed, and would have had no need of a dying establishment. To complete the whole, these journeymen dyers, although not a word is said of their conversion, or even of their existence, in the whole story, are raised into ‘the brethren’ (a term which manifestly denotes the members of the Philippian church) whom Paul and Silas are said to have seen and comforted in the house of Lydia, before they departed.

“All, however, that the history states is, ‘that the Lord opened Lydia’s heart, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul,’ and that she was therefore ‘baptized, and her house.’ From this house, no one has the least authority to exclude children, even young children, since there is nothing in the history to warrant the above-mentioned conjectures, and the word is in Scripture used expressly to include them. All is perfectly gratuitous on the

part of the" defendants: "but, whilst there is nothing to sanction the manner in which they deal with this text, there is a circumstance strongly confirmatory of the probability that the house of Lydia, according to the natural import of the word rendered house, or family, contained children, and that in an infantile state. This is, that in all the other instances in which adults are mentioned as having been baptized along with the head of a family, they are mentioned as 'hearing,' and 'believing,' or in some terms which amount to this. Cornelius had called together 'his kinsmen and near friends;' and while Peter spake, 'the Holy Ghost fell on all them which *heard the word*, and he commanded them to be baptized.' So the adults in the house of the jailer at Philippi were persons to whom 'the word of the Lord' was spoken; and although nothing is said of the faith of any but the jailer himself,—for the words are more properly rendered, 'And he, believing in God, rejoiced with all his house,'—yet is the joy which appears to have been felt by the adult part of his house, as well as by himself, to be attributed to their faith. Now, as it does not appear that the apostles, although they baptized infant children, baptized unbelieving adult servants, because their masters or mistresses believed; and yet the *house* of Lydia were baptized along with herself, when no mention at all is made of the Lord 'opening the heart' of these adult domestics, nor of their believing; the fair inference is, that 'the house' of Lydia means her children only, and that, being of immature years, they were baptized with their mother, according to the common custom of the Jews to baptize the children of proselyted gentiles along with their parents, from which practice Christian baptism appears to have been taken.

"The third instance is that of 'the house of Stephanas,' mentioned by St. Paul* as having been baptized by himself. This family also, it is argued, must have been all adults, because they are said, in the same Epistle,† to have 'addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints,' and further, because they were persons who took 'a lead'

* 1 Cor. i. 16.

† 1 Cor. xvi. 15.

in the affairs of the church, the Corinthians being exhorted to 'submit themselves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with us and laboureth.' To understand this passage rightly, it is, however, necessary to observe, that Stephanas, the head of this family, had been sent by the church of Corinth to St. Paul at Ephesus, along with Fortunatus and Achaicus. In the absence of the head of the family, the apostle commends 'the house,' the family, of Stephanas, to the regard of the Corinthian believers, and perhaps also the houses of the two other brethren who had come with him; for in several MSS. marked by Griesbach, and in some of the versions, the text reads, 'Ye know the house of Stephanas and Fortunatus,' and one reads also, 'and of Achaicus.' By the house or family of Stephanas, the apostle must mean his children, or, along with them, his near relations dwelling together in the same family; for, since they are commended for their hospitality to the saints, servants, who have no power to shew hospitality, are of course excluded. But, in the absence of the head of the family, it is very improbable that the apostle should exhort the Corinthian church to 'submit' ecclesiastically, to the wife, sons, daughters, and near relatives of Stephanas; and, if the reading of Griesbach's MSS. be followed, to the family of Fortunatus, and that of Achaicus also. In respect of government, therefore, they cannot be supposed 'to have had a lead in the church,' according to the Baptist notion, and especially as the heads of these families were absent. They were, however, the oldest Christian families in Corinth, the house of Stephanas at least being called the 'first-fruits of Achaia,' and eminently distinguished for 'addicting themselves,' *setting themselves on system*, to the work of ministering to the saints, that is, of communicating to the poor saints; entertaining stranger Christians, which was an important branch of practical duty in the primitive church, that in every place those who professed Christ might be kept out of the society of idolaters; and receiving the ministers of Christ. On these accounts, the apostle commends them to the special regard of the Corinthian church, and exhorts 'that you range

yourselves under, and co-operate with them, and with every one,' also, 'who helpeth with us and laboureth;' the military metaphor contained in *εταξαυ*, in the preceding verse, being here carried forward. These families were the oldest Christians in Corinth; and as they were foremost in every good word and work, they were not only to be commended, but the rest were to be exhorted to serve under them as leaders in these works of charity. This appears to be the obvious sense of this otherwise obscure passage. But in this, or indeed in any other sense which can be given to it, it proves no more than that there were adult persons in the family of Stephanas, his wife, and sons, and daughters, who were distinguished for their charity and hospitality. Still it is to be remembered, that the baptism of the oldest of the children took place several years before. The house of Stephanas 'was the first-fruits of Achaia," in which St. Paul began to preach not later than A. D. 51, whilst this Epistle could not have been written earlier than A. D. 57, and it might be later. Six or eight years taken from the age of the sons and daughters of Stephanas, might bring the oldest to the state of early youth, and as to the younger branches would descend to the term of infancy, properly so called. Still further, all that the apostle affirms of the benevolence and hospitality of the family of Stephanas, is perfectly consistent with a part of his children being still very young when he wrote the Epistle. An equal commendation for hospitality and charity might be given in the present day, with perfect propriety, to many pious families, several members of which are still in a state of infancy. It was sufficient to warrant the use of such expressions as those of the apostle, that there were in these Corinthian families a few adults, whose conduct gave a decided character to the whole 'house.' Thus the arguments used to prove that in these three instances of family baptism, there were no young children, are evidently very unsatisfactory, and they leave us to the conclusion, which perhaps all would come to in reading the sacred history, were they quite free from the bias of a theory, that 'houses,' or 'families,' as in the commonly received import of the term, must

be understood to comprise children of all ages, unless some explicit note of the contrary appears, which is not the case in any of the instances in question.

“The last argument may be drawn from the antiquity of the practice of infant baptism.

“If the baptism of the infant children of believers was not practised by the apostles and by the primitive churches, when and where did the practice commence? To this question the Baptist writers can give no answer. It is an innovation, according to them, not upon the *circumstances* of a sacrament, but upon its *essential principle*; and yet its introduction produced no struggle, was never noticed by any general or provincial council, and excited no controversy! This itself is strong presumptive proof of its *early antiquity*. On the other hand, we can point out the only ancient writer who opposed infant baptism. This was Tertullian, who lived late in the second century; but his very opposition to the practice proves, that that practice was more ancient than himself; and the principles on which he impugns it, further shews that it was so. He regarded this sacrament superstitiously; he appended to it the *trine immersion*, in the name of each of the persons of the Trinity; he gives it gravely as a reason why infants should not be baptized, that Christ says, ‘Suffer the little children to *come* unto me;’ therefore they must stay until they are able to come, that is, till they are grown up; ‘and he would prohibit the unmarried, and all in a widowed state, from baptism, because of the temptations to which they may be liable.’ The whole of this is solved by adverting to that notion of the efficacy of this sacrament in taking away all *previous sins* which then began to prevail, so that an inducement was held out for delaying baptism as long as possible, till at length, in many cases, it was postponed to the article of death, under the belief that the dying who received this sacrament were the more secure of salvation. Tertullian accordingly, with all his zeal, allowed that infants ought to be baptized *if their lives be in danger*, and thus evidently shews that his opposition to the baptism of infants in

ordinary rested upon a very different principle from that of the modern Anti-pædobaptists. Amidst all his arguments against this practice, Tertullian, however, never ventures upon one which would have been most to his purpose, and which might most forcibly have been urged, had not baptism been administered to infants by the apostles and their immediate successors. That argument would have been, the *novelty* of the practice, which he never asserts, and which, as he lived so early, he might have proved, had he had any ground for it. On the contrary, Justin Martyr and Irenæus, in the second century, and Origen, in the beginning of the third, expressly mention infant baptism as the practice of their times, and, by the latter, this is assigned to apostolical injunction. Fidus, an African bishop, applied to Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, to know, not whether infants were to be baptized, but whether their baptism might take place before the eighth day after their birth, that being the day on which circumcision was performed by the law of Moses. This question was considered in an African synod, held A. D. 254, at which sixty-six bishops were present, and ‘it was unanimously decreed, That it was not necessary to defer baptism to that day ; and that the grace of God, or baptism, should be given to all, and especially to infants.’ This decision was communicated in a letter from Cyprian to Fidus. We trace the practice also downwards. In the fourth century, Ambrose says, that ‘Infants who are baptized, are reformed from wickedness to the primitive state of their nature ;’ and at the end of that century, the famous controversy took place between Augustine and Pelagius, concerning original sin, in which the uniform practice of baptizing infants from the days of the apostles was admitted by both parties, although they assigned different reasons for it. So little indeed were Tertullian’s absurdities regarded, that he appears to have been quite forgotten by this time ; for Augustine says he never heard of any Christian, catholic or sectary, who taught any other doctrine than that infants are to be baptized. Infant baptism is not mentioned in the canons of any council ; nor is it insisted upon, as an object

of faith, in any creed; and thence we infer that it was a point not controverted at any period of the ancient church; and we know that it was the practice in all established churches. Wall says, that Peter Bruis, a Frenchman, who lived about the year 1030, whose followers were called Petrobrussians, was the first Anti-pædobaptist teacher who had a regular congregation. The Anabaptists of Germany took their rise in the beginning of the fifteenth century; but it does not appear that there was any congregation of Anabaptists in England till the year 1640. That a practice which can be traced up to the very first periods of the church, and has been, till within very modern times, its uncontradicted practice, should have a lower authority than apostolic usage and appointment, may be pronounced impossible. It is not like one of those trifling, though sometimes superstitious additions, which even in very early times began to be made to the sacraments; on the contrary, it involves a principle so important as to alter the very nature of the sacrament itself. For if personal faith be an essential requisite of baptism in all cases; if baptism be a visible declaration of this, and is vicious without it; then infant baptism was an innovation of so serious a nature, that it must have attracted attention, and provoked controversy, which would have led, if not to the suppression of the error, yet to a diversity of practice in the ancient churches, which in point of fact did not exist, Tertullian himself allowing infant baptism in extreme cases.

“*The benefits* of this sacrament require to be briefly exhibited. Baptism introduces the adult believer into the covenant of grace, and the church of Christ; and is the seal, the pledge, to him, on the part of God, of the fulfilment of all its provisions, in time and in eternity; whilst, on his part, he takes upon himself the obligations of steadfast faith and obedience.

“To the infant child, it is a visible reception into the same covenant and church—a pledge of acceptance through Christ—the bestowment of a title to all the grace of the covenant, as circumstances may require, and as the mind of

the child may be capable, or made capable, of receiving it ; and as it may be sought in future life by prayer, when the period of reason and moral choice shall arrive. It conveys also the present 'blessing' of Christ, of which we are assured by his taking children in his arms and blessing them ; which blessing cannot be merely nominal, but must be substantial and efficacious. It secures, too, the gift of the Holy Spirit, in those secret spiritual influences by which the actual regeneration of those children who die in infancy is effected ; and which are a *seed of life* in those who are spared, to prepare them for instruction in the word of God, as they are taught it by parental care, to incline their will and affections to good, and to begin and maintain in them the war against inward and outward evil, so that they may be divinely assisted, as reason strengthens, to make their calling and election sure. In a word, it is, both as to infants and to adults, the sign and pledge of that inward grace, which, although modified in its operations by the difference of their circumstances, has respect to, and flows from, a covenant relation to each of the three *persons* in whose *one name* they are baptized,—acceptance by the Father,—union with Christ, as the head of his mystical body, the church,—and 'the communion of the *Holy Ghost*.' To these advantages must be added, the respect which God bears to the believing act of the parents, and to their solemn prayers on this occasion, in both which the child is interested ; as well as in that solemn engagement of the parents which the rite necessarily implies, to bring up their child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

"To the parents it is a benefit also. It assures them that God will not only be their God, but 'the God of their seed after them ;' it thus gives them, as the Israelites of old, the right to covenant with God for their 'little ones,' and it is a consoling pledge that their dying infant offspring shall be saved ; since he who says, 'Suffer little children to come unto me,' has added, 'for of such is the kingdom of heaven.' They are reminded by it also of the necessity of acquainting themselves with God's covenant, that they may diligently

teach it to their children ; and that, as they have covenanted with God for their children, they are bound thereby to enforce the covenant conditions upon them as they come to years,—by *example* as well as by education ; by *prayer* as well as by profession of the name of Christ.

“The mode of baptism remains to be considered. Although the manner in which the element of water is applied in baptism is but a circumstance of this sacrament, it will not be a matter of surprise, to those who reflect upon the proneness of men to attach undue importance to comparative trifles, that it has produced so much controversy. The question as to the proper *subjects* of baptism is one which is to be respected for its importance ; that as to the *mode* has occupied more time, and excited greater feeling, than it is in any view entitled to. It cannot, however, be passed over, because the advocates for immersion are often very troublesome to their fellow-Christians, unsettle weak minds, and sometimes perhaps, from their zeal for a form, endanger their own spirituality. Against the doctrine that the only legitimate mode of baptizing is by immersion, we may first observe, that there are several strong *presumptions*.

“1. It is not probable, that if immersion were the only allowable mode of baptism, it should not have been expressly enjoined.

“2. It is not probable, that in a religion designed to be universal, a mode of administering this ordinance should be obligatory, the practice of which is ill adapted to so many climates, where it would either be exceedingly harsh to immerse the candidates, male and female, strong and feeble, in water, or, in some places, as in the higher latitudes, for a great part of the year, impossible. Even if immersion were in fact the original mode of baptizing in the name of Christ, these reasons make it improbable that no accommodation of the form should take place without vitiating the ordinance.

“3. It is still more unlikely, that in a religion of mercy there should be no consideration of health and life, in the administration of an ordinance of salvation, since it is certain that in countries where cold bathing is little practised,

great risk of both is often incurred, especially in the case of women, and delicate persons of either sex, and fatal effects do sometimes occur.

“4. It is also exceedingly improbable, that in such circumstances of climate, and the unfrequent use of the bath, a mode of baptizing should have been appointed, which, from the shivering, the sobbing, and other bodily uneasiness produced, should distract the thoughts, and unfit the mind for a collected performance of a religious and solemn act of devotion.

“5. It is highly improbable, that the three thousand converts at the Pentecost, who, let it be observed, were baptized on the same day, were all baptized by immersion; or that the jailer, and ‘all his,’ were baptized in the same manner *in the night*, although the” defendants “have invented a ‘tank or bath in the prison at Philippi,’ for that purpose.

“Finally, it is most of all improbable, that a religion like the Christian, so scrupulously delicate, should have enjoined the immersion of women by men, and in the presence of men. In an after-age, when immersion came into fashion, baptisteries, and rooms for women, and changes of garments, and other auxiliaries to this practice, came into use, because they were found necessary to decency; but there could be no such conveniences in the first instance, and accordingly we read of none. With all the arrangements of modern times, baptism by immersion is not a decent practice; there is not a female, perhaps, who submits to it, who has not a great previous struggle with her delicacy; but that, at a time when no such accommodation could be had as have since been found necessary, such a ceremony should have been constantly performing wherever the apostles and first preachers went,—and that at pools and rivers, in the presence of many spectators, and they sometimes unbelievers and scoffers,—is a thing not rationally credible.

“We grant that the practice of immersion is ancient; and so are many other superstitious appendages to baptism, which were adopted under the notion of making the rite more emblematical and impressive. We not only trace

immersion to the second century, but immersion three times, anointing with oil, signing with the sign of the cross, imposition of hands, exorcism, eating milk and honey, putting on of white garments, all connected with baptism, and first mentioned by Tertullian; the invention of men like himself, who with much genius and eloquence had little judgment, and were superstitious to a degree worthy of the darkest ages which followed. It was this authority for immersion which led Wall, and other writers on the side of infant baptism, to surrender the point to the Anti-pædobaptists, and to conclude that immersion was the apostolic practice. Several national churches too, like our own, swayed by the same authority, are favourable to immersion, although they do not think it binding, and generally practise effusion or sprinkling.

“Neither Tertullian nor Cyprian was, however, so strenuous for immersion as to deny the validity of baptism by aspersion or effusion. In cases of sickness or weakness, they only sprinkled water upon the face, which we suppose no modern Baptist would allow. Clinic baptism, too, or the baptism of the sick in bed, by aspersion, is allowed by Cyprian to be valid, so that ‘if the persons recover, they need not be baptized by immersion.’ Gennadius, of Marseilles, in the fifth century, says, that baptism was administered in the Gallic church in his time indifferently, by immersion or by sprinkling. In the thirteenth century, Thomas Aquinas says, ‘that baptism may be given not only by immersion, but also by effusion of water, or sprinkling with it.’ And Erasmus affirms, that in his time it was the custom to sprinkle infants in Holland, and to dip them in England. Of these two modes, one only was primitive and apostolic. Which that was we shall just now consider. At present it is only necessary to observe, that immersion is not the only mode which can plead antiquity in its favour, and that, as the *superstition* of antiquity appears to have gone most in favour of baptism by immersion, this is a circumstance which affords a strong presumption that it was one of those additions to the ancient rite which superstition origi-

nated. This may be made out almost to a moral certainty, without referring at all to the argument from Scripture. The ‘*ancient* Christians,’ the ‘*primitive* Christians’ as they are called by the advocates of immersion, that is, Christians of about the age of Tertullian and Cyprian, and a little downward, whose practice of immersion is used as an argument to prove that mode only to have had apostolic sanction, baptized the candidates naked. Thus Wall, in his History of Baptism: ‘The ancient Christians, when they were baptized by immersion, were all baptized *naked*, whether they were men, women, or children. They thought it better represented the putting off of the old man, and also the nakedness of Christ on the cross; moreover, as baptism is a washing, they judged it should be the washing of the body, not of the clothes.’ This is an instance of the manner in which they affected to *improve* the emblematical character of the ordinance. Robinson also, in his History of Baptism, states the same thing: ‘Let it be observed, that the primitive Christians baptized *naked*. There is no ancient historical fact better authenticated than this.’ ‘They, however,’ says Wall, ‘took great care for preserving the modesty of any woman who was to be baptized. None but women came near till her body was in the water, then the priest came, and putting her head also under water he departed, and left her to the women.’ Now, if antiquity be pleaded as a proof that immersion was the really *primitive* mode of baptizing, it must be pleaded in favour of the gross and offensive circumstance of baptizing naked, which was considered of as much importance as the other; and then we may safely leave it for any one to say, whether he really believes that the three thousand persons mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles were baptized *naked*? and whether when St. Paul baptized Lydia, she was put into the water naked by her women, and that the apostle then hastened ‘to put her head under water also, using the form of baptism, and retired, leaving her to the women’ to take her away to dress? Immersion, with all its appendages, dipping three times, nakedness, unction, the eating of milk and honey, exor-

cism, &c. bears manifest marks of that disposition to *improve* upon God's ordinances, for which even the close of the second century was remarkable, and which laid the foundation of that general corruption which so speedily followed.

"But we proceed to the New Testament itself, and deny that a single clear case of baptism by immersion can be produced from it. The baptism of John is the first instance usually adduced in proof of this practice. The multitudes who went out to him were 'baptized of him IN Jordan;' they were therefore *immersed*.

"The second proof adduced by the Immersionists is taken from the baptism of our Lord, who is said 'to have gone up straightway out of the water.'* Here, however, the preposition used signifies from, and *ανεβη απο τη υδατος*, is simply 'he went up from the water.' We grant that this might have been properly said in whatever way the baptism had been previously performed; but then it certainly in itself affords no argument on which to build the notion of the immersion of our Saviour. The great passage of the Immersionists, however, is, 'And they went down both *into* the water, both Philip and the Eunuch, and he baptized him; and when they were come up *out* of the water,' &c.† This is relied upon as a decisive proof of the *immersion* and *emersion* of the Eunuch. If so, however, it proves too much, for nothing is said of the Eunuch which is not said of Philip. 'They went down BOTH *into* the water;' 'and when THEY were come up *out* of the water;' and so Philip must have immersed himself as well as the Eunuch. Nor will the prepositions determine the case; they would have been employed properly had Philip and the Eunuch gone *into* the water by partial or by entire immersion, and therefore *come out of it* on dry land; and with equal propriety, and according to the habitual use of the same prepositions by Greek writers, they would express going *to* the water, without going *into* it, and returning *from* it, and not *out* of it; for *ες* is spoken of place, and properly signifies *at*; or it indicates motion towards a certain *limit*, and, for any thing that appears to the con-

* Matt. iii. 16.

† Acts viii. 38, 39.

trary in the history of the Eunuch's baptism, that *limit* may just as well be placed at the nearest verge of the water as in the middle of it; thus the LXX. say, 'The king sent Rabshakeh from Lachish (εἰς) to Jerusalem,'* certainly not *into* it, for the city was not captured. 'The sons of the prophets' came (εἰς) to Jordan to cut wood.† They did not, we suppose, go *into* the water to perform that work. Peter was bid to 'go (εἰς) to the sea, and cast a hook,' not surely to go *into* the sea; and our Lord 'went up (εἰς) to a mountain,'‡ but not *into* it. The corresponding preposition, ἐκ, which signifies, when used of place, *from*, *out of*, must be measured by the meaning of εἰς. When εἰς means *into*, then ἐκ means *out of*, but when it means simply *to*, then ἐκ can express no more than *from*. Thus this passage is nothing to the purpose of the Immersionists.

"The next proof relied upon in favour of immersion is John iii. 22, 23. The Immersionists can see no reason for either Jesus or John baptizing where there was *much water*, but that they plunged their converts. The true reason for this has, however, been already given. Where could the multitudes who came for baptism be assembled? Clearly, not in houses. The preaching was in the fields; and since the rite which was to follow a ministry which made such impression, and drew together such crowds, was baptism, the necessity of the case must lead the Baptist to Jordan, or to some other district, where, if a river was wanting, fountains at least existed. The necessity was equal in this case, whether the mode of baptism were that of aspersion, of pouring, or of immersion.

"The" defendants, however, "have magnified Ænon, which signifies *the fountain of On*, into a place of 'many and great waters.' Unfortunately, however, no such powerful fountain, sending out many streams of water fit for plunging multitudes into, has ever been found by travellers, although the country has been often visited; and certainly if its streams had been of the copious and remarkable character assigned to them, they could not have vanished.

* Isaiah xxvi. 2.

† 2 Kings vi. 4.

‡ Matt. v. 1.

It rather appears, however, that the ‘much water,’ or ‘many waters,’ in the text, refers rather to the whole tract of country, than to the fountain of On itself; because it appears to be given by the Evangelist as the reason why Jesus and his disciples came into the same neighbourhood to baptize. Different baptisms were administered, and therefore in different places. The baptism administered by Jesus at this time was one of multitudes; this appears from the remarks of one of John’s disciples to his master: ‘He that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and ALL MEN *come to him*.’ The place or places, too, where Jesus baptized, although in the same district, could not be very near, since John’s disciples mention the multitudes who came to be baptized by Jesus, or rather by his disciples, as a piece of information; and thus we find a reason for the mention of the much water, or many waters, with reference to the district of country itself, and not to the single fountain of On. The tract had probably many fountains in it, which, as being a peculiarity in a country not generally so distinguished, would lead to the use of the expression ‘much water,’ although not one of these fountains or wells might be sufficient to allow of the plunging of numbers of people, and probably was not. Indeed, if the disciples of Jesus baptized by immersion, the Immersionists are much more concerned to discover ‘much waters,’ ‘many waters,’ ‘large and deep streams,’ somewhere else in the district than at Ænon; because it is plain, from the narrative, that the number of candidates for John’s baptism had greatly fallen off at that time; and that the people now generally flocked to Christ. Hence the remark of John (iii. 30), when his disciples had informed him that Jesus was baptizing in the neighbourhood, and that ‘all men came to him’—‘He must increase; I must decrease.’ Hence also the observation of the Evangelist, in the first verse of the next chapter, ‘The Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized *more disciples* than John.’

“As these instances all so plainly fail to serve the cause of immersion, we need not dwell upon the others. The

improbability of three thousand persons being immersed on the day of Pentecost, has been already mentioned. The baptism of Saul, of Lydia, of the Philippian jailer, and of the family of Cornelius, are all instances of house baptism, and for that reason are still less likely to have been by plunging. The Immersionists, indeed, invent ‘tanks,’ or ‘baths,’ for this purpose, in all their houses; but as nothing of the kind appears on the face of the history, or is even incidentally suggested, suppositions prove nothing.

“Thus all the presumptions before mentioned, against the practice of immersion, lie full against it, without any relief from the Scriptures themselves. Not one instance can be shewn of that practice from the New Testament; whilst, so far as baptism was emblematical of the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, the doctrine of immersion wholly destroys its significancy. In fact, if the true mode of baptism be immersion only, then must we wholly give up the phrase, the *baptism* of the Holy Spirit, which in any other mode than that of *pouring* out was never administered.

“The only argument left for the advocates of immersion is, the supposed allusion to the mode of baptism contained in the words of St. Paul.* It is necessary, however, to quote the next verses also, which are dependent upon the foregoing; ‘For if we have been PLANTED together,’ still by baptism, ‘in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection; knowing this, that our old man is CRUCIFIED with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin.’† Why then do not the advocates of immersion go forward to these verses, so inseparably connected with those they are so ready to quote; and show us a resemblance, not only between baptism by immersion and being buried with Christ, but also between immersion and being ‘planted with Christ’? If the allusion of the apostle is to the planting of a young tree in the earth, there is clearly but a very partial, not a total immersion in the case; and if it be to GRAFTING a branch upon a tree,

* Rom. vi. 3, 4.

† Rom. vi. 5, 7.

the resemblance is still more imperfect. Still further, as the apostle in the same connexion speaks of our being '*crucified with Christ*,' and that also by baptism, why do they not show us how immersion in water resembles the nailing of a body to a cross?

"But this striking and important text is not to be explained by a fancied resemblance between a burial, as they choose to call it, of the body in water, and the burial of Christ; as if a dip or a plunge could have any resemblance to that separation from the living, and that laying aside of a body in the sepulchre which burial implies. This forced thought darkens and enervates the whole passage, instead of bringing forth its powerful sentiments into clearer view. The manifest object of the apostle, in the whole of this part of his epistle, was to shew, that the doctrine of justification by faith alone, which he had just been establishing, could not in any true believer lead to licentiousness of life. 'What then shall we say? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid! How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?' The reason then which is given by the apostle why true believers *cannot* continue in sin, is, that they are '*dead to sin*,' which is his answer to the objection. Now, this mystical death to sin he proceeds to attribute to the INSTRUMENTALITY of baptism, taking it to be an act of that faith in Christ of which it was the external expression; and then he immediately runs into a favourite comparison, which, under various forms, occurs in his writings, sometimes accompanied with the same allusion to baptism, and sometimes referring only to 'faith' as the instrument,—a comparison between the mystical death, burial, and resurrection of believers, and the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. This is the comparison of the text; not a comparison between our mystical death and baptism; nor between baptism and the death and burial of Christ; either of which lay wide of the apostle's intention. Baptism, as an act of faith, is in fact expressly made, not a *figure* of the effects which follow, as stated in the text, but *the means* of effecting them. 'Know ye not that so many of

us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death?' we enter by this means into the experience of its efficacy in effecting a mystical death in us; in other words, *we DIE* with him, or, as it is expressed in verse 6, 'our old man is *crucified with him*;' still further, 'by baptism,' *through*, or *by means of*, baptism, 'we are buried with him;' we not only die to sin and the world, but we are separated wholly from it, as the body of Christ was separated from the living world when laid in the sepulchre. The connexion between sin and the world and us is completely broken, as those who are buried and put out of sight are no longer reckoned among men; nay, as the slave (for the apostle brings in this figure also) is by death and burial wholly put out of the power of his former master, so 'that we should not *serve* sin; for he that is dead is freed from sin.' But we also mystically *RISE* with him, 'that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life,' having new connexions, new habits, new enjoyments, and new hopes. We have a similar passage in Col. ii. 12, and it has a similar interpretation. In the preceding verse the apostle had been speaking of the mystical *death* of Christians, under the phrase, '*putting off the body of the sins of the flesh*;' then, as in his Epistle to the Romans, he adds, our mystical burial with Christ, which is a heightened representation of death, and then also our *rising* again with Christ. Here too all these three effects are attributed to baptism as the means. We *put off the body* of sin 'by the circumcision of Christ,' that is, as we have seen, by Christian circumcision or *baptism*; we are *buried* with him by baptism; *εἰς* being obviously used here, like *διὰ*, to denote the instrument; and by baptism we *rise* with him into a new life.

"Now, to institute a comparison between a mode of baptism and the burial of Christ, wholly destroys the meaning of the passage; for how can the apostle speak of baptism as an *emblem* of Christ's burial, when he argues from it as the instrument of our *death* unto sin, and separation from it by a mystical burial? Nor is baptism here made

use of as the emblem of our spiritual death, burial, and resurrection. As an emblem, even immersion, though it might put forth a clumsy type of burial and rising again, is wanting, in not being emblematical of DEATH ; and yet all three, our mystical *death, burial, and rising again*, are distinctly spoken of, and must all be found represented in some TYPE. But the TYPE made use of by the apostle is manifestly not baptism, but the death, the burial, and the resurrection of our Lord ; and in this view he pursues this bold and impressive figure to even the verge of allegory, in the succeeding verses. ‘ For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him : knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more : death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once : but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God : LIKEWISE reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.’

“ In the absence, therefore, of all proof, that, in any instance found in the New Testament, baptism was administered by immersion ; with so many presumptions against that indecent practice as have been stated ; with the decisive evidence also of a *designed* correspondence between the baptism, the *pouring out*, of the Holy Spirit, and the baptism, the *pouring out*, of water ; we may conclude, with confidence, that the latter was the apostolic mode of administering that ordinance ; and that first washing, and then immersion, were introduced later, towards the latter end of the second century, along with several other superstitious additions to this important sacrament, originating in that ‘ will worship,’ which presumed to destroy the simplicity of God’s ordinances, under pretence of rendering them more emblematical and impressive. Even if immersion had been the original mode of baptizing, we should, in the absence of any command on the subject, direct or implied, have thought the church at liberty to accommodate the manner of applying water to the body in the name of the Trinity, in which the essence of the rite consists, to different climates and

manners ; but it is satisfactory to discover that all the attempts made to impose upon Christians a practice repulsive to the feelings, dangerous to the health, and offensive to delicacy, is destitute of all scriptural authority, and of really primitive practice. To say that it figures our spiritual death and resurrection, has, we have seen, no authority from the texts used to prove it ; and to make a sudden pop under water to be emblematical of burial, is as far-fetched a conceit as any which adorns the Emblems of Quarles, without any portion of the ingenuity.

TENTH WITNESS.

I, the TENTH WITNESS, beg to state that, "It was far from my intention to have" come before this Court to give my testimony, "had not the officious zeal and triumphs of" our opponents "become quite intolerable. To be attacked as an individual, and that publicly from the press, I cannot help calling unhandsome. The principles ('of the mode of baptism') no doubt may be attacked in this way, if they be thought wrong; but" as I am "only one of thousands who hold them," I cannot surely for this be a sinner above all that dwell round me.—"Necessity, therefore, is upon me; and I am obliged either to defend them, or submit to be trampled under foot.—Nothing has been preached by me, but what I publicly profess to believe, and am solemnly bound by my ordination vows to declare.—To provoke a controversy is by no means my desire, and especially a religious wrangling like this.

Our opponents "always begin by trusting to an arm of flesh; they take care not to quote Scripture texts in support of this opinion (that βαπτίζω signifies to dip, and that εἰς signifies into), nor yet to give Matt. xxviii. 19, according to" their "translation, and tell the people what it says they are to be dipped into. They are never informed that the baptismal statute (which is considered by men of" their "persuasion as containing a complete directory for every thing necessary to the right administration of baptism,) contains not one word about water, nor any thing like dipping into water. No, this would make discoveries, and therefore common men, who always understand the element to be water, are left in pious ignorance about these things. Thus the system is patched out, and becomes passable.

"As Pædobaptists maintain that a person may have all

that is essential to baptism by being either sprinkled or dipped, it will not be of much consequence, on my principles, whether an instance of this kind can be given or not. If βαπτίζω can be shewn to signify sometimes one thing, and sometimes another; and if it can be shewn that in the New Testament it will neither bear to be translated to dip, nor to sprinkle, when employed to express the ordinance of baptism; it will be quite enough for my purpose, but it will not do for" theirs. "Dipping is of such importance, according to" their "system, that there can be no Christian baptism, unless the whole body be immersed in water. βαπτίζω, then, the particular word which the Spirit of God employs to express this ordinance, must signify to dip, and always to dip, when expressive of this ordinance, or their cause is lost. This is plain, for if it signifies sometimes to dip and sometimes to sprinkle, baptism may be administered either way, at least so far as this word is concerned. And if in relation to this ordinance it will neither bear to be translated to dip, nor to sprinkle, then this leading word in the baptismal statute leaves us at liberty, unless we have a positive command for dipping somewhere else; and this I believe they will not so much as pretend is the case. On the scriptural meaning then of this particular word the controversy turns, and without its aid they have nothing left that can support their system. Going down to the water and coming up from the water will do nothing, if βαπτίζω does not dip the whole body when the person is there." I shall "then proceed to examine whether the New Testament meaning of this word be to dip or immerse the whole body, and whether it always signifies so when connected with baptism. And pray, recollect, that if it does not, and if but one instance can be found against" them, "dipping as the only mode of baptism is a lost cause.

"Now in the New Testament we may find plenty of passages where this particular word occurs, and so need not perplex poor people with quibbling about the criticism of learned men. This word βαπτίζω occurs about seventy times in the New Testament. It is the only word, so far as I can

discover, which the Spirit of God employs to express the ordinance of baptism, and it is never, in one instance, translated to dip or immerse. Of this "they" "can perhaps satisfy themselves by searching the Greek New Testament; and if" they "find there one single instance, in which it is either translated to dip, or can be fairly shewn to signify the immersion of the whole body," they "will find what I cannot.

"There are, perhaps, cases in which it is doubtful, such as Mark vii. 4," but "there is not one decisive enough for them; and," be it remembered, "they should all be decisive on their side, for ten, or even twenty, will not save" their "system.

"But let us try an instance or two, that the world may know whether we prophesy out of our own hearts, or whether we speak according to what is noted in the Scriptures of Truth. And as this task is put upon me, I would refer for one instance to Acts i. 5; 'For John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.' This instance I select for three reasons. The first is, that the passage is mentioned at least six times in the New Testament. The second is, that it refers to John's baptizing in Jordan, on which so much has been built. And the third is, that scriptural history tells us particularly in what manner this promise was fulfilled, when the disciples were baptized with the Holy Ghost. Let us then look up the passages, and see whether it was by dipping or sprinkling, and here we shall have the certainty of Scripture explaining Scripture for our guide. Look to Acts i. 8, and you will find in what way Christ, when he mentioned the promise, meant this baptism with the Holy Ghost to be administered. Now nothing, one would think, could be more certain than the speaker's explanation of his own words, and he says, in regard to the mode of this baptism, 'ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is *come upon you*.' This then will not do for dipping, or they must adopt a new mode. The next passage in which this baptism is mentioned, is Acts ii. 3; it contains the accomplishment of what Christ had said, and what do they find done? 'There appeared unto

them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.' This will not do either; for as to the foolish notion of being immersed in a sound which filled the house, it will be of no service to dipping, till you put people into a dry baptistry, and pour water about them. Besides, it was not the sound of the wind, but the symbol of tongues, which was the emblem of the Holy Ghost.

"The third account we have of this matter is in Acts ii. 17, 18, where Peter explains it to be the fulfilment of a particular prophecy, and tells us in what way God himself said the disciples should be baptized with the Holy Ghost. Now pray notice the words; 'And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will *pour out* of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: and *on* my servants and *on* my hand-maidens I will *pour out* in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy.' Look forward to verse 33, and you find Peter again mentioning this baptism of the Holy Ghost, and he tells his audience that Christ shed forth that which they saw and heard. But" they "know shedding forth will not do for dipping. There are still two or three passages more where this baptism is mentioned. These are Acts viii. 16; x. 44, 45; xi. 15, 16. In all these places the mode of baptism with the Holy Ghost is particularly mentioned, and in all of them we are assured it was by *pouring out*, and falling upon, and never by dipping or immersion. 'While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost *fell on* all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that *on* the Gentiles also was *poured out* the gift of the Holy Ghost.' 'And as I began to speak (says Peter), the Holy Ghost *fell on* them, as *on us* at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized *with* water, but ye shall be baptized *with* the Holy Ghost.'

"Now," Gentlemen, "does it not appear from these passages that" the sentiments of the Baptists "are the doctrines

of men, opposed to the declarations of the great God?" Let them "examine them: they will bear examination, and bring conviction of" their "error too, if they are not refusing to be ashamed.

"These are all the accounts I can find of this matter. They all, you see, notice the particular mode in which men were baptized with the Holy Ghost; and they all, with one consent, declare it was not by dipping, or any thing resembling it, but by *pouring out* and *falling upon*; and this is just sprinkling, in other words. Now, whether this is not an instance of the above Greek word literally signifying sprinkling, or *pouring out upon*, I leave to" themselves. "When they have given as clear an instance from the New Testament of its signifying dipping, we shall be equal. No—equal! what did I say?" They "will then have proved that baptism may be administered either by dipping or sprinkling, because βαπτίζω signifies both. They will then have proved our opinion to be right, and" theirs, "that dipping is the *only mode* of baptism, wrong.

"But," Gentlemen, "I assure you it will be easier" for our opponents "to propose queries than to produce such examples. They are rather scarce in the New Testament, unless they take βάπτω to dip, which word some have made to lie horribly for God, but which, since it is never employed to express the ordinance of baptism, will only bear to be produced for an example of βαπτίζω among those who cannot distinguish one Greek word from another.

"But perhaps we are making conclusions too fast. Let us see if βαπτίζω in the above example will not bear to be rendered to dip, to plunge, to immerse. This *has been attempted*, and in this way the passage will read thus—'John truly plunged you *with* water, but ye shall be plunged with the Holy Ghost.' Or perhaps" they "will object to this, and say it should be translated 'plunged *in* water, and plunged in the Holy Ghost.' Well, let them have it all" their "own way, it still sounds rather uncouth. But this is not the worst of it, for it gives the direct lie to the passages

I have quoted, as containing the Scripture history which we have of this baptism. It says to Christ,* The Holy Ghost did not come upon the apostles, for they were plunged in the Holy Ghost. It says to God,† The Holy Ghost shall not be poured out upon all flesh, for all flesh shall be plunged in the Holy Ghost. It says to Peter and those of the circumcision who believed,‡ You were all in a delusion, for” we “know better than you, although you were eye witnesses, and” we “insist that on the Gentiles was not poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. Alas,” Gentlemen, “this really will not do: the Scripture cannot be broken: Christ cannot bear false witness: God cannot lie: Peter and the circumcision who believed could not be so easily deceived as” they “and” their “learned men. There is not a single instance of dipping in the Holy Ghost in all the Bible, and the baptism mentioned in these passages was, beyond all peradventure, performed by sprinkling, or pouring out, and falling upon.

“John baptized with water in the same way, for the very same words are used with regard to both baptisms. Look at the passage carefully—‘John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.’ But they were baptized by the Holy Ghost by pouring out, and falling upon, and therefore, by a parity of reasoning, John baptized in Jordan in the same way, by pouring out and making to fall upon. He went down to the river, or say a little way into it, and by pouring water on the individuals who confessed their sins, and submitted to the ordinance, he baptized them. This I am sure” they “will allow was as easy a mode as dipping them bodily in the river; and whether it was not as likely, I leave these considerations to determine.

“In the mean time, let me ask again, if Acts i. 5 is not an instance such as” they “demand? Any instance is all” they “ask, and one instance is quite enough for my purpose; for if βαπτίζω does not *always* signify to dip or immerse when connected with this ordinance,” their “cause is undone.

* Acts i. 8.

† Acts ii. 17.

‡ Acts x. 44.

There may then be baptism according to the meaning of this word, when there is no dipping, although "their" doctrine expressly asserts that there can be no such thing.

"Lest, however," they "may think there are no more instances in Scripture in" our "favour, I am willing to let" them "take any one" they "please, and I persuade myself it will prove against them. The doctrine of dipping I humbly think cannot be proved from the Bible, and therefore, instead of furnishing us with instances from this sure word of prophecy," they "always attempt to put us out of our senses with what" they "call the opinions of learned men. Scriptural examples of this word, however, are the only things which furnish a ground of faith for a common man. And I am quite satisfied, for my part, that the faith which stands on the wisdom of learned men was never designed for common people: and this" they "know will not do for dipping. Well, what example will" they "give a poor unlettered man, to persuade him they are right? Is it, 'And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea'?*" This is certainly a passage on which much stress has been laid; and this I acknowledge, that sea sounds well, and there would at least be water enough.

"But permit me to remark, if this was dipping, it was dry dipping, for we are told that the children of Israel on that occasion 'went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and walked upon dry land in the midst of the sea.'† Now when" they "dip in a dry baptistry, and the people walk in the midst of it on dry ground, this example will do, but not till then. Indeed it is highly probable, from the great hosts of Israel which passed through the Red Sea, that they occupied such a space of ground, that many of them were not within a quarter of a mile of the watery walls, either on the right hand or the left; and therefore, how they could be plunged in the sea I leave sages to determine.

"But if βαπτίζω here signifies immersion, they were also plunged into the cloud, and how this happened I cannot tell. The sacred historian says, the Lord went before them

* 1 Cor. x. 2.

† Exodus xiv. 22, 29.

in a pillar of cloud by day, to lead them the way, and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; and on this occasion the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them; but at what time the Israelites were above it, and plunged into it, he does not say; and yet" this Court knows that "nothing short of this will come up to the idea of dipping or immersion. I rather think that none of the Israelites were permitted to approach near this sacred symbol of the divine presence, and much less to metamorphose it into a plunging place.

"But let us try" their "primary and most natural meaning of words in translating the verse; perhaps this will make things better. Now here is the Greek verb βαπτίζω, the primary and most natural meaning of which, according to the most eminent and learned authors of different countries," they "say is to immerse, to dip, to plunge. And here is the Greek preposition εἰς, which" they "say naturally expresses the idea of into. Translate the verse in this learned way, then, and it will read, 'and were all plunged into Moses in the cloud and in the sea.'

"Alas," Gentlemen, "we have all been in a mistake together. The passage says nothing, it seems, about plunging in the cloud and in the sea, but *into Moses*; and this was certainly a strange element! And were all plunged into Moses!

"Really, I pity the poor man; and yet, perhaps," they are "not less objects of pity whose meaning of words makes Moses' body a baptistry for all the children of Israel. Nay, let me seriously ask" them, "if this primary and most natural meaning of words does not make some eminent and learned authors, of different countries, appear to have strange head pieces?

"I shall honestly acknowledge there is certainly a particular and specific use of water in the ordinance of baptism. Nay, I have no hesitation in declaring this to be my humble opinion, that the particular and specific use of water in baptism is to apply it to the body, so as to represent the application of Christ's purifying blood and Spirit to the soul.

Well, let me ask, then, In what way are these said in Scripture to be applied to the soul for cleansing it from sin? This ought certainly to be the way in which water should be applied to the body to represent that cleansing.

“And I am much mistaken indeed, if” they “can find one instance of dipping in the blood and Spirit of Christ for this purpose in all the Bible. Scripture never speaks in this style, so far as I know, nor even suggests such an idea as plunging in the precious blood of the Son of God. No, sprinkling with this precious blood is sufficient to sanctify the *whole man*, and therefore sprinkling is the usual style in which Scripture speaks on this subject. Hence it calls this blood ‘the blood of sprinkling,*—says, men are ‘elect through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and *sprinkling* of the blood of Jesus Christ:’† and assures us it is by this mode of application ‘our hearts are sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.’‡

“This was the way, too, in which the application of Christ’s blood and Spirit were typified under the Old Testament. Accordingly, if you read of the cleansing of the leper, which strikingly represented our cleansing from sin, you find this was the direction which the priest received; ‘And he shall *sprinkle* upon him that is to be cleansed from the leprosy, seven times, and he shall pronounce him clean.’§ In a similar way, the Levites were to be cleansed; for says God to Moses, ‘Thus shalt thou do unto them, to *cleanse* them; *sprinkle* water of purifying upon them.’|| And what shall I say more? in the blood of the passover lamb, there was no dipping of the Jews; for they kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood:¶ nay, we never read of such a thing as dipping the whole body in any blood, which was appointed to typify the precious blood of the Son of God. With the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer, they *sprinkled* the unclean.** ‘Moses took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, (and did not these typify

* Heb. xii. 24. † 1 Pet. i. 2. ‡ Heb. x. 22. § Lev. xiv. 7. || Numb. viii. 7.

¶ Heb. xi. 28. ** Heb. ix. 13.

the blood and Spirit of Christ? Well, how were they applied?) and *sprinkled* the book, and all the people: he *sprinkled* likewise with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry.* And now, if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer, *sprinkling* the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; is not the blood of Christ, who, through the Eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God, sufficient, when applied *the same way*, to purge the conscience from dead works, to serve the living God? The passage certainly intimates so much, and the man who says nothing less than dipping the whole body will do to represent the application of Christ's blood to the whole soul, says he is wiser than God, and dares to assert that the Most High has appointed an improper type for representing what is signified in baptism. Nay, this dipping doctrine does more; for when God says, 'I will *sprinkle* clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean,'† and declares, 'Christ shall *sprinkle* many nations,'‡ it says, 'Lord, this will not do. Sprinkling will never make *them* clean. They must be wholly under the water. And this I insist upon, as the only way in which that cleansing can be represented in baptism.'

"If I am asked, what is the most natural and determinate sense of the verb βαπτίζω, I say, as employed to express the ordinance of baptism, it signifies the application of water to the body, so as to represent the application of Christ's blood and Spirit to the soul; and there is no single word in the English language, so far as I know, which comes up to its *full meaning*. The verb to wash, perhaps, comes nearest it, and our translators of the Bible have sometimes rendered it into English by this verb (to wash), but in general they merely give it an English form; and when employed to express the ordinance of baptism, they always do so: and, believe me, they had as much learning, and sense too, as all" the eminent authors of our opponents "put together. They thought before they wrote, and tried their translation by the text, which some men seem never to have done. I

* Heb. ix. 19—21. † Ezek. xxxi. 25. ‡ Is. lii. 15.

have now told" them, "frankly and fearlessly, what I think is the determinate meaning of this word βαπτίζω, and what is the specific use of water in baptism: and I could almost appeal to" themselves, "if this be not a fair argument, and a legitimate conclusion. Those baptized by the Holy Ghost* were all baptized by shedding forth, and pouring upon, and not one of them by plunging. The thing represented in baptism, is the application of Christ's blood and Spirit to cleanse the soul from sin; and this the Scripture represents as effected by sprinkling, and never by dipping, Therefore, *dipping* in baptism is completely at variance with the Scriptures, and the *sprinkling* of that precious blood which it is intended to represent.

"This, however, is not only an argument which proves" them "wrong, but which, at the same time, proves from Scripture, and without any aid from eminent authors, that Pædobaptists are right. It affords to some of us a satisfactory reason of the hope that is in us, though we could say no more; and yet, perhaps, they will find some more can be said.

"But the" defendants "seem to have so little idea of what is right and wrong according to Scripture, that I must inform" them. — "Though I had said that the word βαπτίζω neither signified dipping nor sprinkling, but that it left the mode of baptizing a matter of *indifference*; it would only have been saying, that Scripture does not expressly enjoin every thing respecting the worship of God, and the administration of divine ordinances. And are" they "prepared to deny this? Well then, let me ask, whether it hath enjoined" them "to dip people in a river, or in a baptistry; in their own clothes, or in a linen gown? And let me ask, also, whether it hath enjoined" them "to let down people into the well like a dead body into the grave, that they may be buried in baptism: or whether it hath directed them to lead them down like a living subject, and dip them as a nurse dips a child?

"It will be in vain to plead, from Rom. vi. 3, 4, and Col.

* Acts i. 5.

ii. 12, that there must be a resemblance, in baptism, to a burial and resurrection, for where is this resemblance in" their "mode of dipping? a living person walks into the water, till it reach his loins, and submits to be ducked by a minister; and is this like putting a dead body into the grave? Those who can see a resemblance here to the mode of burial, either in Britain or Judea, must see as far as the man who made Pharaoh's horses ministers of the gospel. Besides, the burial alluded to in these passages is that of our blessed Lord; and how his body was laid in a sepulchre hewn out of a rock, neither they nor I can tell. We can only tell with certainty that it did not step down into this sepulchre, and that we have no reason to think it was deposited after the manner of dipping; and therefore to talk of imitating, in baptism, what we know nothing about, but this, that we do not imitate it, is *very near akin to nonsense*."

Let our opponents "tell us honestly, then, do" they "mean, by thus rendering the Greek prepositions *into* and *out of*, that the one signifies *into* the water, so as to be wholly immersed in it; and the other signifies *out of*, so as to come up again? If" they "do not mean this," they "mean nothing with which Pædobaptists will find any fault. According to the use of these Greek prepositions in the New Testament, there is no necessity for supposing that the person who went (*εἰς*) *into* the water, and came (*ἐκ*) *out of* the water, wet even the soles of his feet. But although they should suppose that *εἰς* took a man in to the knees, or even to the loins, it would never prove that he went over the head. Nay, at this depth he might be sprinkled with fully as much ease as he could be dipped, and the baptizer would have this advantage, there would be no stooping in order to reach the water.

"This, then, is the point" they "have to prove, that *εἰς* takes a man over the head, and *ἐκ* brings him up again out of the water. Keeping this in view, then, let us proceed to try their natural ideas by the New Testament; and here there will be no need to look long, in order to find plenty of examples of these prepositions. Look to Matt. v. 1, and"

they “will find one quite to” their “purpose. ‘And seeing the multitude, he went up *into* a mountain, and when he was sat, his disciples came unto him: and he opened his mouth and taught them.’ Now, here is the Greek preposition *εἰς*, and it is rendered *into*, exactly as they want it. Well, does it mean that our blessed Lord went *into* the mountain, so as to be up to the knees, or loins, or over the head: and that in the heart of the earth his disciples came unto him? Alas! Sirs, I fear much that your natural ideas were never gathered from the New Testament, for *into*, here, does not signify that so much as one inch of our Lord’s body was in the mountain; and consequently *εἰς*, as I have said, may be used in describing the administration of baptism, and yet not suggest that the person baptized wet the sole of his foot.”

Let them “look forward to Matthew xv. 24, and” they “will find another example of this Greek preposition; ‘I am not sent but’ (*εἰς*, *into*)—I shall translate it in” their “own natural way, that there may be no mistake,—‘I am not sent but *into* the lost sheep of the House of Israel.’ Now do they think our Lord went *into* their bodies to preach the gospel to them? I rather think their natural ideas would multiply miracles unnecessarily. But let us take another example, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every thing may be established; and for this” they “have only to look forward to Matthew, xvii. 27, ‘Go thou (*εἰς*) to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the first fish that cometh up.’ Here the preposition is used in relation to the sea or water, and so must be an example in point. And what does it say? That Peter was ordered to go *under* the water, and cast an hook and catch a fish. This is” their “natural idea, if the preposition have anything to do with dipping; but it is certainly an idea, to say no worse of it, which set Peter on a new mode of fishing.

“And as to the preposition *ἐκ*, it is not one whit more in their favour. Only try how naturally these pages will read in their way; ‘She was found with child (*ἐκ*) *out of* the Holy Ghost.’* ‘The tree is known (*ἐκ*) *out of* his fruit.’† ‘All

* Matt. i. 18.

† Matt. xii. 33.

these have I kept (*ἐκ*) *out of* my youth.* And do" they really think, "when it is said 'The queen of the south came (*ἐκ*) *from* the uttermost parts of the earth,'† that she came *out of* the ground, or from under those parts of the earth, as a dipped person comes from under the water?—No indeed," their "natural ideas are at open war with the Bible, for these are a mere specimen of the examples which might be produced against them; and therefore the best apology I can make for such ideas is, that they arise from a natural ignorance of the Greek particles.

"But where are these Greek particles used in describing the administration of baptism? It is not, I am sure, in Matthew iii. 16, nor yet in Mark i. 10, where our Lord's baptism is mentioned; for there" they "find no such prepositions, nor indeed any Greek word which '*naturally expresses the idea*' that our blessed Lord was in the water at all. It only says, according to the Greek, that he went up *from* the water immediately after he was baptized, and says nothing about whether he was in the water, or only at the side. Yet it would be quite unnecessary to tell us that any body came up *straightway* from under the water, for we all know, if they stopped there any time they would be drowned.

"But there is another passage, which speaks about going down to the water, and coming up from the water; and there is only one, so far as I know, in which these prepositions are both used. It is in Acts viii. 38—39, and is thus translated; 'And he commanded the chariot to stand still, and they went down both (*εἰς*) into the water, both Philip and the Eunuch: and he baptized him. And when they were come up (*ἐκ*) out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip,' &c. What water this was we cannot tell, only it was in the way from Jerusalem to Gaza, and might either be a spring or a rivulet; for I scarcely think there was any river in that desert. But be this as it may, you have seen that the prepositions *εἰς* and *ἐκ*, in the New Testament, ought frequently to be rendered simply *to* and *from*; and therefore we have no more proof from this passage that

* Matt. xix. 20.

† Matt. xii. 42.

Philip and the Eunuch were in the water, and came out of the water, than we have that our Lord was in the mountain, or that the queen of the south came out of the heart of the earth. But supposing that Philip and the Eunuch went both of them literally *into* the water, and came literally up *out of* the water, what does this prove? That they were in to the ankles, or the knees perhaps, and that is all.

“Now there the Eunuch might be sprinkled as easily as at the side, for there would not be so far to stoop for the water; and as the people then wore sandals for shoes, and a sort of petticoat for small-clothes, the Eunuch, although he had been in the water, would neither have been obliged to strip, nor submit to any inconveniency, on the supposition that he was sprinkled. But if he was wholly immersed in the water, he must either have stripped naked, or changed his clothes, or made a wet chariot, though we should speak of no other consequences; and that he did any of these, the silence of the passage, and the circumstances of the case, make very improbable.

“Nay, that *εἰς* here cannot signify over the head, the passage makes abundantly plain; for it tells us repeatedly they went down *both* into the water, both Philip and the Eunuch, and therefore both were equally deep. But I suppose” they (the ministers) “do not usually go under the water” themselves “every time” they “dip an individual; and yet” they “must do so, before *εἰς*, in this solitary passage, be of any service to” their “cause. Some folks would almost suspect that the Spirit of God had foreseen what use they would make of this passage, when it is so particularly said, ‘They went down *both* into the water, *both* Philip and the Eunuch.’

“And now what becomes of their system? βαπτίζω does not signify to dip in the New Testament, and *εἰς* does not take a man over the head; and without the assistance of these two words, you cannot find the doctrine of dipping in the whole Bible. I only wonder how any person, who can examine the New Testament for himself, can be of these sentiments. And were it not for the high respect I have for

many excellent and worthy men who have adopted them, I should think it impossible for any thing but the most unblushing ignorance to say, this is the *apostolical*, the *scriptural*, and the only mode of baptism. Prejudice and party, however, are powerful things, and I have no doubt that sincerity and truth are the distinguishing excellencies of many who differ in opinion from me. Besides, great men have not always time to examine little things, and ponder every principle they adopt.

“But perhaps I have not exactly understood” their meaning, “for” they “speak as if *εις* and *εν* were commonly used in describing the administration of baptism, and I have found only one solitary passage in which they are both used. *Εις*, however, is frequently used along with *βαπτίζω* in describing the administration of this ordinance, and perhaps it was here they meant we should also show that it did not naturally express the idea of *into*. Now this will be easily done; and it will afford me an opportunity of showing, that if common men would only translate scripture in the way our opponents do, they would soon see the nakedness of the land.

“Let us try, then, a passage or two; and that these may be as unexceptionable as possible, I shall select only some of” their “favourite texts. We shall begin with the baptismal statute, as they call it, which is the very corner stone of the building. Now what does it say, according to” our opponents’ “most natural signification and natural ideas? ‘Go ye therefore and teach all nations, *dipping* them *into* the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.’* Here I would ask, Did they ever try their own translation of *βαπτίζω* and *εις*? They are both here, and they bring certain strange things to our ears; for they say the apostles were to dip people into a name—‘Teach all nations, *dipping* them *into* the name,’ &c. How do” they “perform this experiment? for to me it appears impracticable. A sand baptism is nothing to this. With” their “sentiments, I could not for my neck know how to baptize

* Matt. xxviii. 19.

by dipping into a name, it is such an uncommon element. Surely much learning doth make" them "mad. *Dipping* then *into* a name! and yet, if" their "*sense* is not to be suspected, this was the ordinary way the apostles did: for, according to" their "translation of the Greek text, we are told of some* who had not received the Holy Ghost, only they were *dipped into the name* of the Lord Jesus; and again we read of others† who were *dipped into the name* of the Lord Jesus; and Paul says, 'I thank God that I dipped none of you but Crispus and Gaius, lest any should say that I had *dipped into my own name*.'‡ A name, therefore, seems to have been the ordinary element in which people were dipped in baptism, according to their meaning of βαπτίζω and εἰς; but how the experiment was performed, and this natural idea was reduced to practice, is above my capacity.

"Let us examine another passage, where these words are used in describing the administration of baptism; and as there is a second text, which is bomb-proof according to" their "system, we shall take it. This is found Rom. vi. 3, 4, and it contains the words in question over and over again. And pray what does" their "meaning of words make it? Translate it, and see; 'Know ye not that so many of us as were *dipped into* Jesus Christ, were *dipped into* his death? Therefore we are buried with him by *dipping* into death.' Alas," Sirs, "things grow worse and worse, the more you bring them to the test: and sure I am, if any thing could put a man or a system to the blush, it must be such miserable murdering of the word of God as this. Can" they "really look these passages in the face (and they are the very pride of" their "party)—I say, can" they "really look them in the face, and say again βαπτίζω naturally signifies to dip, and εἰς naturally expresses the idea of into? If they can, there is only one thing more to be wondered at, and that is, how any man with their sentiments can maintain there is only one mode of baptism. For though we were to say nothing about water or sand, here" they "can prove from Scripture that there is one mode of bap-

* Acts viii. 16.

† Acts xix. 5.

‡ 1 Cor. i. 14, 15.

tism which consists in *dipping into a name*; another which consists in *dipping into Christ*; a third which consists in *dipping into death*; and we found a fourth which was performed by *dipping into Moses' body*. Now" let them follow out their "principles, and furnish us with an example of them in real life. If they be practicable, I am certain the practice will do more for Pædobaptists than all the books that can be written on the subject. A few *dippings into death* will do the business, though they should try no other mode.

"But" they "cannot live according to what they profess;" their "system is impracticable, and can exist only in theory. They cannot dip people into a name, into Christ, and into death. The thing is impossible, and the idea is horrible. Only think in what figure and form of dress believers are made to appear by" their "murdering this text. 'For as many of you as have been *dipped into Christ*, have put on Christ.'* Besides, I must remark that express and implicit commandment men, like" them, "have no scriptural warrant for water baptism at all." (I do not intend "to deny that there was a command for using water in John's baptism;† nor yet that a duty may be inferred from Scripture, as well as enjoined by an express command. Hence Pædobaptists think it sufficient that they have scriptural examples to warrant their using water in baptism. But this will not do for those who admit of nothing short of express and explicit commands for positive institutes: such men as say, '*If revelation in regard of positive institutes be not express and explicit, I see not how we can be obliged to observe them. A law in this case is in effect no law, and where there is no law, there is no transgression.*') Although they demand from us an *express* and *explicit* command for infant baptism, and say, *To go beyond or come short of what is expressly and explicitly noted in the Scriptures of Truth with respect to a positive institute, is to set aside the institution itself, and practise a human rite*; yet" they "do not remember that there is no such command for dipping *into water* in Christian

* Gal. iii. 27.

† John i. 33.

baptism; and therefore, on their own principles, if they dip into it, they set aside the institution itself, and practise a human rite. They have no command to dip into any thing but into a name; ‘Go ye therefore and teach all nations, *dipping them into the name* of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.’” They “must, therefore, either renounce their own sentiments, published to the world, or renounce water baptism as an ordinance of God, and betake themselves to dipping into a name. This is” their “case, if consistency were there characters, and this a consequence resulting from” their “principles; that all of them who have been dipped *into water* are unbaptized, for they have only *been practising a human rite*.

“Since I began, therefore, to examine the Greek *New Testament* carefully on this subject, I have a thousand times wondered at the wisdom of Dippers in never attempting to dip into their own doctrines as exhibited there. They never try their own translations, nor shew us to what extravagant lengths their doctrines would lead.

“Our opponents tell us that, *according to learned authors*, βαπτίζω signifies to dip, and εἰς signifies into; and then, *taking this for granted*, all goes on smoothly. In this way the sentiment has received an astonishing currency among common and conscientious men. Deluded with the dogmas of dipping, they never read of John baptizing in Jordan, or in Enon, near Salim, because there was much water there, but they immediately think that every person who went to hear a sermon by the side of a river, went over the head. It never occurs to them that Judea was a country which was parched with thirst. That John preached in a place proper for accommodating the multitudes which flocked to him from Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the regions round about Jordan. Such a multitude must assemble in a wilderness, or they would destroy their neighbour’s property; and such a multitude, assembled in a wilderness, must have much water to drink, or they would die for thirst. But, I say, these things never occur to” them. They “think of Judea as if it were Great Britain; and because none baptize by rivers,

now but dippers, they think it must have been so then. Thus the pious cheat proceeds without detection, and many good and gracious souls who cannot read Greek, and who do not remember that John baptized with water, in the same way that the disciples were baptized with the Holy Ghost, are led away with the delusion. Nay, they do not remark that as such multitudes never flocked to the apostles after our Lord's death, such places were never chosen for their accommodation. After the baptismal statute was given,* I think we only read of one individual who was baptized in any thing like a river. And if the Eunuch was really baptized in a river, it was merely for this reason, that it was the first water he came to, *after he professed his faith* in our Lord Jesus Christ.

"I shall honestly acknowledge that if all the baptisms we read of in the New Testament had been administered in Jordan, or by the side of rivers, I should have thought it a strong circumstance. Even the accommodation of a large audience in a parched land, would not have accounted sufficiently for it. But when I read of the thousands which were baptized at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, where we find no account of either river or pool where the multitude were assembled; † when I read of both men and women being baptized at Samaria, and no mention of any such thing; ‡ and when I read of Cornelius, and his kinsmen, and near friends, at Cæsarea, being baptized in a house, and nothing said but 'Who can forbid water that these should not be baptized?' § Yes, when I read of not one after the ascension of Christ that came up from any water, except the Eunuch, this last shadow of proof evanishes like the morning cloud and the early dew. I cannot interpret these words 'Who can forbid water that these should not be baptized?' as meaning, Who can hinder these people from going to a river or pool to be dipped? The water was certainly to be brought where these converts were, and a baptistry would have been rather an unhandy article to carry into a house. Nay I cannot think that when Peter *saw* that on

* Matt. xviii. 19. † Acts ii. 41. ‡ Acts viii. 12. § Acts x. 27, 47.

these gentiles was *poured out* the gift of the Holy Ghost, he would baptize them in any other way with water, than that in which he knew they had been baptized with the Holy Ghost. Besides, when scripture mentions such circumstances as these, ‘He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments, and took a towel and girded himself;’* and again, ‘The witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man’s feet whose name was Saul.’† I say, when we read of clothes being so particularly mentioned in such cases as these, is it not very strange, if persons were dipped in baptism, that we never in one instance read of them either wetting their clothes, or changing them, or having any garments prepared for the occasion? And if dipping was the order of the day, is it not as strange that we never read of any one person, who was led from the place where he was converted either to a baptistery or a river to be baptized. Nay, we read nothing about baptistries or pools for the purpose, but wherever persons professed their faith in Christ there they were baptized, according to the history we have in the Acts of the Apostles. Now these appear to me circumstances of some importance, as you cannot suppose that persons unacquainted with the gospel, and its ordinances, could prepare baptistries before it was preached unto them, and so have all things in readiness for an ordinance day.

“I have now gone through all of” their “scriptural queries on the subject, and every thing I have seen advanced as *Scripture proof that dipping is the only mode of baptism*: and if my prejudices are not uncommonly strong, it is as pitiful a cause as ever Scripture was brought to prove. This, however, would not be worth noticing, if the pitiful proof were not made to support a doctrine which unchurches almost the whole world. With them, if there be no dipping, there is no baptism. If there be no baptism, there is no visible church membership. This sweeping doctrine, then, declares the visible church of Christ is confined to those who are dipped. All else, though eminent as a Harvey, a Henry, or an Owen, or any body else, are not

* John xiii. 4. † Acts vii. 58.

so much as visible church members, and if they went to heaven, it was not through the medium of the visible church. This is an awful doctrine, and should not be supported by slender proof. Nothing but the clearest evidence should convince any man that a doctrine so unchristian could ever be countenanced by Christ.

“If Pædobaptists were not able to prove their opinions clearly, there would still be this to recommend them, that they are charitable ones. With them, the particular mode of baptism is not a matter of such importance. For they allow that a person may have all that is essential to baptism by being either sprinkled or dipped, and that godly persons of every Christian denomination are visible church members. Yes, whoever believes in Christ, and brings forth the fruits of righteousness in his life—whoever manifests the truth of his faith by a conversation becoming the gospel, whether he have been dipped or sprinkled, or wherever he be found, we esteem him a man of God. But with them, nothing will do without *dipping* or being *wholly under* the water. This is a something which shuts the doors of the *visible* church, and says, Stand by, you shall not enter in here. And if this be not putting things out of their proper place, and giving the same importance to the tithing of mint, and anise, and cummin, as to the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith, some of us are mistaken.

“The Bible is the book of faith, and what cannot be proved from thence, all the lying wonders of the world will never make better. There are a kind of fairy regions where fiction and fancy find a place, and the inventions of men are interwoven with the institutions of God. This is a favourite soil for the seeds of error, and those roots of bitterness which have sprung up and troubled the church: and travellers from these regions can lie shamefully for their party, and not one soul in a thousand find them out. Common men seldom have it in their power to search into the truth of their story, and see the wonders of this far famed land. Lest any of us, then, should be tempted to trip on this enchanted ground, as some have done before us, we shall stay by the Bible, and

then every man who has a Bible can search it, and see whether these things be so.

“They ask, Do not *all the professed Christians in Asia, all in Africa, and about one-third part of Europe, that is to say, about one half of what is called the Christian world, baptize by immersion only; and may not the Greek church be supposed to understand the meaning of the Greek word βαπτίζω, at least as well as the most learned men in this country? Do not the Danes, the Swedes, the Germans, and the Dutch render the word βαπτίζω by expressions that signify to dip?* Asia and Africa are not very Christian quarters of the globe. And yet though all these professors should dip who dwell in the regions of darkness and horrid cruelty, they would be very improper examples for the enlightened churches of Great Britain to imitate. As those of the Greek church, however, are to be our safest interpreters of βαπτίζω, they should have told us in what part of the world persons of that communion understand the Greek New Testament any better than themselves, and I am sure that is not profoundly. In Russia, and the most of those places where the Greek church prevails, I fear they scarcely know what βαπτίζω is; and even in Greece at present, perhaps you will find, on examination, that the *Greek* which the apostles wrote is nearly, if not altogether, an unknown tongue. For what purpose, then, do” they “speak vain words, and blind the world with the breath of their mouth?

“Our opponents bring forward what they call a very remarkable declaration of Dr. Wall, which says, ‘*All those countries in which the usurped power of the pope is, or has formerly been owned, have left off dipping of children in the font, but all other countries in the world, which never regarded his authority, do STILL use it.*’ And I would have said, it is very remarkable indeed! for America never owned the pope’s authority, and yet there you find they have left off dipping children in the font. In Britain, too, where the Bible is better understood than in any country in the known world, the people in general, *since they disregarded* the pope’s authority, have left off dipping children

in the font. But almost all the professed Christians in Asia, in Africa, and about one-third part of Europe, either own or have owned the pope's authority, or are very nearly allied to popery, and yet they tell us gravely that *all these baptize by immersion only*. I fear, in the abundance of their zeal, they have overdone the matter; and though we should not suppose fonts for dipping to be popish, they have proved contrary to their purpose that *dipping*, and not *sprinkling*, is a limb of antichrist.

"But, whatever they may have proved, their design in making this quotation is abominable. It is a dastardly attempt to do with sprinkling, what the persecutors did with the martyrs, when they clothed them in the skins of wild beasts, that the dogs might worry them.

"They also quote from the Book of Common Prayer; but they should have been so honest as to have told us, that though in one *case* it authorizes either dipping or sprinkling, in *another*, it authorizes sprinkling only, and now a *more enlightened age* has established the last as a general practice.

"I have been even asked, 'Can Pædobaptists give any good reason for the *application of water to the face, rather than to the feet, seeing there is a precedent for the latter in the New Testament, but none for the former?*'

"I shall tell them one good reason. We think both undressing and uncovering in a place of worship very indecent; and could not, before a multitude, uncover a lady's feet to baptize them. These things are only fit for the feelings of such men as can print and publish without provocation, and openly challenge Pædobaptists by the lump. But where is the precedent for feet baptism in the New Testament? I fear, when they seek for it again, they will find it has run away. Do they mean that our Lord's washing the disciple's feet is the instance? Why, there is not one word about baptism in the whole chapter: and if they wanted merely an instance of water employed to a particular part of the body, they certainly must be grossly ignorant of even the Gospel according to John, which they quote, if they could

not find an instance in which water was applied to the face. Let them look to John ix. 6, 7, and say, if the blind man did not apply water to his face, when he washed away the clay from his eyes. Now, do they think any man could trust them in quoting from church history; or even from professed Christians in Asia, and Africa, and Europe;—Danes, and Swedes, and Germans, and Dutch, when their assertions contradict the very Bible?

“But I shall tell them another good reason we have for applying water to the face, rather than to the feet. We think the Scripture has not specified any particular part of the body, and in this case we are left at liberty to apply it to any part we think proper, or the whole. Now, we think it more proper to apply water to the skin in baptism, than to the clothes, and as without uncovering or undressing (which we count an abomination in the house of God) we could not apply it to the skin, except on the face.

“But I might say further, we find many instances in the Scripture where a part is expressive of the whole, and therefore we think the face, which is the most expressive part of the man, sufficient to express the whole man. Do they know of no instance in which a man was said to be baptized when water was applied only to a part? Let them read, in the Greek text, Luke xi. 38, and you will find ‘one. There our blessed Lord was invited to dine with a Pharisee; ‘Now the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the traditions of the elders;’ but our Lord, who did not follow these superstitions, did not wash his hands at this Pharisee’s house before he ate, as was the custom; and what is said? ‘The Pharisee seeing, wondered that *he* had not first been (ἐβαπτισθη) *baptized*, before dinner.’ Perhaps some gentlemen do not know this passage, who make their people laugh at sprinkling, by calling it a baptizing of the finger ends only. I rather suppose there was not much more among the water, in this washing of hands before meat, and yet the Scripture calls it baptism, and the baptism not of hands merely, but of the whole person.

“And now, what shall I say to the query” of our opponents, “who cry out, ‘Can any Pædobaptist furnish an answer that will not be in favour of immersion as the only proper mode of administering baptism?’ I shall only say, this looks very like the language of Goliath of Gath, who defied the armies of Israel, and said, ‘Give me a man, that we may fight together.’ And really,” Sirs, “it reminds me of the minister’s head that rang because it was empty. Be assured that whoever take upon themselves to challenge a whole body of men to answer such” a question, “it is only the thistle in Lebanon saying to the cedar in Lebanon, Give thy daughter to my son to wife:”^{*} and the world will understand it so.

“‘I shall beg leave to remind’ our opponents ‘of some principles, according to one of their own writers, which may be of use to them. He says, ‘*The Scriptures are our only sure guide in matters of religion. Our obligations, in regard to faith and practice, extend only to those things which are noted in the Scriptures of truth. Our practice, in positive institutes, must be regulated by what is expressly and explicitly noted in the Scriptures of truth.*’ Now, on these principles let them prove the doctrine of dipping, and” they “will do far better than they have ever yet done. But, let them remember, they will be expected to keep to the point, and furnish some evidence that they have read the Greek New Testament on the subject. For my style, I should make an apology. It is that, in religious controversies, of which my own mind does not approve, but here I plead necessity. It appears necessary to suit our language to the callousness of some of” our opponents, “in order that our answers may be felt;—and—Titus i. 10—13, seemed also to justify something of the kind; but I am sorry when there is occasion for such severity.

“And now,” gentlemen, “having troubled” the Court “so long, I shall take my leave by relating a whale-fishing story. I have been told, that at the commencement of this trade, an amazing number of lives were lost by the following cir-

^{*} 2 Kings xiv. 9.

cumstance: Whenever the whale came to the top of the water, after receiving the harpoon, she immediately aimed a stroke with her tail at the boat, and often sent the whole crew to the bottom. At last, however, they invented this stratagem to preserve their lives. Having provided themselves with a sufficient number of tubs, they no sooner struck a whale, than they hove out a few of these, and the whale, mistaking the tubs for the boat, spent her strength in beating them to pieces, and the boat was preserved.

“Now,” gentlemen, “controversies or trials of this kind are the devil’s tubs, and so long as we and others spend our strength on these, Satan’s kingdom will be safe. But I hope the world will take no offence at the mild, and merciful, and peaceful religion of the blessed Jesus, because, ‘there is sometimes a strife among the disciples who shall be accounted the greatest.’ They well know that on these two commandments, love to God, and love to our neighbour, hang all the law and the prophets; and that the minister who does not bend all his force to this point, and make all his ministrations bear on this great object, mistakes the end of his office. Yes, our great business is to do good, and promote peace, by preaching the gospel of the kingdom. We are to be peace-makers, and not pests to society.”

COUNSEL FOR THE DEFENDANTS.

IT now becomes my duty to address your Lordship and the Gentlemen of the Jury on behalf of the defendants: and I think myself happy that I have to answer this day the accusations brought against them; more especially because I know you to be expert in all questions which have been, or may be, brought before you, relative to this great cause. "Wherefore I beseech you to hear me patiently."

I shall have to trespass very much upon your time, owing to the great length of the evidence given by the witnesses for the plaintiffs, to a great part of which I must of necessity reply. I am exceedingly sorry that you have been so long detained listening to arguments and statements in support of a claim, which will appear in the sequel to be without foundation, and the invalidity of which it is my duty to expose. I entertain no personal hostility towards any of the plaintiffs; but still I have too much regard for the honour of my King to permit his laws to be impugned without doing my utmost to silence those who contemn them.

There is not, Gentlemen, a cause on record in any way similar, or worthy to stand in comparison with the one before you; we have, therefore, no precedents for our guide, but those which we deduce from the Will. Nevertheless, the precepts and examples therein contained are sufficient to enable me to establish our claim; and I shall regard all which the learned counsel and his witnesses have advanced to the contrary, drawn from other sources, as of no authority. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."*

* Isaiah viii. 20.

As regards the pretended insufficiency of the Scriptures, I shall have to show elsewhere that the statement is without foundation. Every thing which is necessary for us to believe and to practise is to be found therein, no matter in what part of the globe we may be situated. My learned opponent boasts of being a member of the Church of England. Hear, then, Gentlemen, the testimony which that church gives of their all-sufficiency, and contrast it with what he has advanced. "Holy Scripture containeth ALL THINGS necessary to salvation, so that WHATEVER IS NOT READ therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man. Voluntary works besides, OVER and ABOVE God's commandments—cannot be taught without ARROGANCY and IMPIETY. Things ordained by general councils as necessary to salvation have neither strength nor authority, unless it be declared that they be taken out of Holy Scripture."*

I feel my inability to do justice to THE GREAT CAUSE; but I pray, "with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel,"† and thus convince you, by indubitable evidence, that our claim is valid, and that its foundation "standeth sure."

Evidence, Gentlemen, from profane history, let it be ever so well authenticated, cannot be admitted; much less then that which is collected from MUTILATED books, the SCATTERED FRAGMENTS of which only remain. My learned opponent says, that "if by these fragments we be able to trace the practice of infant sprinkling, through all preceding ages, to that of the apostles, it must be allowed a strong *presumptive* argument in favour of its having originated with the apostles themselves." But this avails him nothing; for even if it could be proved to be coeval with the apostolic age, yet it would be no argument at all in its favour, without undoubted apostolic authority; for in less than forty days after Moses had gone up to Mount Sinai, the Jews turned idolaters: yet the idolatry did not originate with Moses. And if he could trace the practice of infant sprinkling even

* See the 6th, 14th, and 21st Articles.

† Eph. vi. 18, 19.

up to the apostolic age (which he cannot do), it would not only prove that the antichristian practice prevailed at that time, but it would confirm the truth of the prediction of the Apostle Paul, who said, "I know this, that after my departure shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking *perverse things*, to draw disciples after them."*

We have instances, Gentlemen, under the old dispensation, which prove, that after God had given to his people institutions, they disregarded them, and substituted something else in their stead. These are examples to us which clearly show that no length of time can weaken or vary the laws of God, and that for whatever period of time they may have been neglected, disregarded, and despised by the world, they will none the less be regarded by all who shall inherit the promises.

For nearly a thousand years, the Jews had neglected to keep the feast of tabernacles according to the command: but when they returned from the Babylonish captivity, "all the people gathered themselves together as one man—and they spake unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to Israel; and Ezra the priest brought the law before the congregation both of men and women, and *all that could hear with understanding*. And they found written in the law, which the Lord had commanded by Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in booths, in the feast of the seventh month: and that they should publish and proclaim in all their cities, and in Jerusalem, saying, Go forth into the mount, and fetch olive branches, and pine branches, and myrtle branches, and palm branches, and branches of thick trees, to make booths, as it is written. So the people went forth and brought them, and made themselves booths.—And all the congregation of them that were come again out of the captivity made booths, and sat under the booths; for since the days of Jeshua the son of Nun, unto that day, had not the children of Israel *done so*. And there was a very great gladness."†

* Acts xx. 29, 30.

† Neh. viii. 1, 2, 14—17.

Again, "Shaphan the scribe shewed the king, saying, Hilkihah the priest hath delivered me a book. And Shaphan read it before the king. And it came to pass when the king had heard the words of the book of the law, that he rent his clothes. And the king commanded—Go ye, enquire of the Lord for me, and for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that is found: for great is the wrath of the Lord that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to *do according to all that which is written concerning us.*"* ' And the king—made a covenant before the Lord, to walk after the Lord, and to keep his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes, with all their heart, and all their soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. And all the people stood to the covenant.—And he put down the *idolatrous priests*, whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense in the high places in the cities of Judah, and in the places round about Jerusalem; them also that burned incense unto Baal, to the sun, and to the moon, and to the planets, and to all the host of heaven. And all the houses also of the high places that were in the cities of Samaria, which the kings of Israel had made to *provoke* the Lord to anger, Josiah took away. And the king commanded all the people saying, Keep the passover unto the Lord your God, as it is WRITTEN in the BOOK OF THIS COVENANT. Surely there was not holden such a passover from the days of the judges that judged Israel,"† *i. e.* about eight hundred years.

And again; Hezekiah, "in the first year of his reign, opened the doors of the house of the Lord, and repaired them. And he brought in the priests and the Levites, and gathered them together—and said unto them, Hear me, ye Levites, sanctify now yourselves, and sanctify the house of the Lord God of your fathers; and carry forth the FILTHINESS out of the holy place. For our fathers have trespassed, and done that which was evil in the eyes of the Lord our God, and have forsaken him, and have turned away their

* 2 Kings xxii. 10—13.

† 2 Kings xxiii. 3, 5, 19—22.

faces from the habitation of the Lord, and turned their backs. Also they have shut up the doors of the porch, and put out the lamps, and have not burned incense, nor offered burnt-offerings in the holy place unto the God of Israel. Wherefore the wrath of the Lord is upon Judah and Jerusalem, and he hath delivered them to trouble, to astonishment, and to hissing, *as ye see with your eyes.*"* "So they established a decree to make proclamation throughout all Israel, from Beer-sheba even to Dan, that they should come to keep the passover unto the Lord God of Israel at Jerusalem: for they HAD NOT DONE IT OF A LONG TIME IN SUCH SORT AS IT WAS WRITTEN."†

Here are three remarkable instances of the Jews, as a nation, neglecting, for hundreds of years, to keep the feasts, according to the command of God, and afterwards returning to their true observance. Add to which the signal punishment inflicted upon them for neglecting this precept, "the land shall keep a Sabbath unto the Lord."‡ They were sent into captivity for seventy years, because, contrary to the command, they had without intermission, for the space of four hundred and ninety years, sown their fields, pruned their vineyards, and gathered in the fruit thereof; a seventh part of which time they had deprived the land of its rest. They were therefore driven from it, "until the land had enjoyed her Sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate, she kept Sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years."§

These examples shew us the folly and wickedness of disregarding the commission of the Testator, and that, though it may have been set at nought for nearly seventeen hundred years, that circumstance can neither weaken its force, nor be any excuse for prostituting the sacred ordinance. The Jews, as you all know, were, and still are, delivered "to trouble, to astonishment, and to hissing," because they departed from the true worship of God. They are living witnesses of this truth; and their example ought to be a warning to the plaintiffs not to sin after their manner. The book of the law was then neglected, as the gospel is now;

* 2 Chron. xxix. 3—8. † 2 Chron. xxx. 5. ‡ Levit. xxv. 2. § 2 Chron. xxxvi. 21.

and as the Jews were blinded and kept in ignorance of the law of God by the priests substituting traditionary legends in its stead ; so the people of the present day, with all their boasted independence and knowledge, are kept in ignorance of the truth of the gospel, by their priests substituting in its room SCRAPS of tradition, handed down from the ancients ; and persuading them that “ the Will is not an all-sufficient guide,” and that “ they ought to acquiesce in such rules that are recommended to them by long practice ; and that are established by those who have the lawful charge over them.” But as they have followed for so long a time the evil example of the Jews, I would counsel them to follow it no longer, but to imitate their example when they returned from Babylon, and gather themselves together as one man, and speak to their priests, and those who rule over them, and say, Read out of the Will of the Testator what the Lord has commanded *to all that can hear with understanding* ; for great is the wrath of the Lord that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of the Will, to do according to all that which is written concerning us ; that we may find what is written in the Will, and proclaim throughout the earth, saying, Keep the ordinance of the Testator, as it is written in the book of the covenant.*

You have no doubt observed, Gentlemen, that neither my learned opponent nor his witnesses bear us any good will. This is not surprising ; their dislike of us may arise from a feeling of envy ; for they must be conscious, notwithstanding their boasts, that they cannot overturn the foundation on which we stand. Great admissions in our favour have been extorted from the witnesses, who have, occasionally, even condescended to flatter us. But neither their admissions nor flattery shall induce us to treat the commandments of our Lord with so little respect, as to allow that they may be observed, or omitted, or varied, at the pleasure or caprice of any man, or body of men. And though we sincerely wish that all our fellow-men were in possession of the “ one thing needful,” we have too much regard for the honour and

* See also Josh. i. 7, 8.

veracity of the Testator, to suppose that he should so far deny himself, as to treat with favour and affection those who trample upon his edicts; when he has declared that those who honour him he will honour, and that those that despise him shall be lightly esteemed.*

The baptism which the Testator has expressly commanded is that of believers, and believers only : his example, together with the practice of the apostles, clearly indicate that the word baptize signifies the putting under water of a believer by the individual who baptizes ; and that no other action can express its import. We therefore assert, that unless the ordinance be administered according to the letter and spirit of the commission, it is not only not available, but that it is a rebellious act. ‘Christ honoured the institution, by being himself baptized of John, in Jordan, typical of the overwhelming sufferings which he had in prospect ; knowing that after being plunged in the deepest sorrows, and buried in the earth, he should rise again, and ensure a joyful resurrection to all his redeemed.’ But there is not a passage in the will which authorises the baptism of infants, neither can all the ingenuity of men wrest one to that purpose, although they have been attempting it for nearly eighteen hundred years. I know only of two reasons for christening infants, in the present day ; the one is, because it is an old custom, the other, because people have not the courage to leave the beaten track. “O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider ” and read the Will, and judge for themselves ; then they would no longer regard, or practise, this abomination.

What you have heard in this court, Gentlemen, must convince you that it is almost impossible for a variety of witnesses, speaking under a variety of circumstances, so to concoct a tale, which has not truth for its basis, as to impose upon a jury. When witnesses contradict each other, and each one frequently himself, it must carry a strong conviction to the minds of all, that the object they seek to obtain is an unjust one ; as, on the contrary, the harmony of evidence on the other side will tend to convince all that the object sought is

* 1 Sam. ii. 30.

justifiable. We shall apply this rule to the case before us. If it can be shown that the witnesses in the first place are consistent with each other, and in the second that each is consistent with himself; or, on the contrary, discordant in both instances; it will be no difficult matter to determine on which side the truth lies. And I trust, through the blessing of the Most High, so to convince you of the clearness of our cause, as to make your decision on this important subject an easy task.

The learned gentleman says, that if it were possible to make it appear that his clients had no interest in the Will, the majority of the Christian world would be excluded. Well, if this be the case, where lies the fault? Does it not lie with themselves? The Will is sufficiently clear and explicit. The Testator declares it is "all plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge."* And he asks this question, "What could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done in it?"† I believe few are hardy enough to say that more could have been done, without depriving them of their free agency. And what if my learned opponent does not consider the decisions of the Will just, does his opinion make them the less so? If he do not live to think otherwise, it will at the last day be made manifest that he has been mistaken; and his misery will be much enhanced, from the conviction that it has been entirely through his own wilful rejection of the plainest injunctions. But now, if he thoroughly understood its precepts, he would be convinced that it excludes no one; for "God that cannot lie" has said, that "your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins" have made him hide "his face from you, that he will not hear."‡ The Testator persuades, admonishes, and encourages every one to come to him, in the way of his appointment, and it is only those who refuse that he threatens "with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."§

"You, Gentlemen, have no doubt been careful not to allow your judgments to be misled by the sophisticated

* Prov. viii. 9.

† Isaiah v. 4.

‡ Isaiah lix. 2.

§ 2 Thess. i. 9.

reasoning of the plaintiff's counsel; or by the questionable evidence adduced by the several witnesses. In viewing the case, you must divest your thoughts of the long space that has intervened between the first publication of the Will, and the present time, with all the supervening canons and traditions of men; and judge of it in the same manner as you would if it had been published only as yesterday. Neither length of time, nor place, nor circumstances, can affect its requirements in anywise; "The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever; the thoughts of his heart to all generations."*

This is a case that differs from every one that has yet come before a jury; you are not to judge of the claims of either party from their own testimony, even if that were consistent with itself in every particular, any further than their evidence is borne out by its exact accordance with the whole tenor of the Will. No evidence is to be received, however specious it may appear, that is not fully supported and sustained thereby in every particular: and to be impartial judges in this case, you must yourselves be divested of all prepossessions or preconceived opinions, and bring every doctrine to the test of that unerring standard, the Book of Life. This is all-sufficient to guide your judgment, and not yours only, but that of every one in the Court; for none can possibly err who are directed by its infallible dictates.

I shall pass over all that my learned opponent has said of a personal nature, both as respects my clients and myself; replying only to what bears directly on the subject. He has informed you of the nature of the plaintiffs' claim, and read to you the two clauses on which they attempt to maintain it. I am sure it has been to you a wearisome duty to listen attentively to the arguments advanced by himself and his witnesses, in order to wrest the plain meaning of the plainest Scripture texts. Their main object is to prove, that sprinkling water, or pouring it, on an infant's face, is fulfilling the first clause. They touch very slightly upon the second and principal one, (some of them not even noticing

* Ps. xxxiii. 11.

it) whether designedly or otherwise, is only known to themselves. It is this clause which clearly defines that which gives a title to the privileges of, and constitutes a man, an heir; and while any one remains ignorant of this, he cannot expect to be a partaker of the promise. This, on Scripture principles, is undeniable and incontrovertible. The act itself is of great moment, being commanded by the Testator, and is only exceeded by that of which it is a figure. It is downright folly to attempt to prove, that an infant can believe by proxy, or that a few drops of water sprinkled on its face can make any difference between it and one upon which this mock ceremony has not been performed, or that it can affect the child in anywise, either temporally or spiritually. Yet these things must be proved to your satisfaction before the plaintiffs can establish their claim. You could not, Gentlemen, I am persuaded, before you heard the evidence here adduced, have thought it possible that men liberally educated, possessing splendid talents, who are acute reasoners upon all other subjects, could advance such absurdities; absurdities emanating from colleges and academies, and absurdities too attended with the most baneful consequences, which not only prevent men from listening to the plain instructions contained in the Will, with that simplicity which the Will itself requires, but which throws an air of mystery around these instructions, that blinds the eyes of their disciples, so that they cannot see the true light. "It is sufficiently notorious that the truths of the gospel are not taught in our leading public schools; on the contrary, they may be considered as the fountain-head of that error" which prevails to so great an extent among the plaintiffs.

I would not here be thought to decry human erudition; to it we are indebted for our excellent translation of the Will, so ably and deservedly praised by the first witness. But, Gentlemen, it is one thing to translate the Will, and another "to be filled with a knowledge of His will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding."* Learning, when rightly applied, is a great blessing. But, in all the public and private institutions for human learning, though the knowledge

* Col. i. 9.

of the Will is professedly taught, yet it is taught only "by the precept of men." And it is to them that are so taught that the Testator says, "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."*

If my learned opponent would allow me to give him a word of advice, I would entreat him, and all who hear me, not to take the opinion of any man (however wise, or learned, or celebrated he may be, he is still only a man), but to search the Scriptures for themselves, looking for divine illumination; for it is only by their own diligent searching, with humble and earnest prayer to Him who giveth every good and perfect gift, that they can ever be brought to a true, just, and saving knowledge of the truths therein contained. But they require the whole soul to be called into action, with all the powers of the mind, together with undivided attention. *All* are clearly told, "Ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with *all your heart*."† I am far from denying that man may be a means of instructing his fellow man. But this instruction must be conformable to the Scripture standard, and every doctrine and practice tried by that test. And I would further advise both him and them not to trust those teachers who profess to do such great things for them, lest they may find, when it is too late, that they have been "trusting in the staff of a broken reed."‡ And I will ask my opponent whether, if this were a human will, in which he is informed that a valuable legacy is left to him, he would not diligently examine it, to ascertain the extent and value of the bequest, and not trust to any individual, whatever confidence he might repose in his assertion? I am sure he would. In all common cases of life, the very circumstance of being informed that he had been remembered in such a man's will, would make him anxiously desirous of perusing it; he would not trust to the report of any one. And why then is it that we are so indifferent respecting our interest in this, on which our eternal happiness depends; and compared with which, millions of worlds are absolutely

* Matt. xv. 8, 9.

† Jer. xxix. 13.

‡ Is. xxxvi. 6.

nothing? It is the effect of a fatal infatuation, with which the great enemy of souls has bewitched mankind at large; who, unless the Lord graciously awaken them to a sense of the danger of neglecting the one thing needful, suffer themselves to be entirely engrossed, during their whole lives, with the cares and vanities of this world.

We need not so much wonder that the ordinance of baptism, as instituted by the great Testator, should have been corrupted, when we compare the length of time since his death, with the proportionately short period that has elapsed since a command was given by a national church to administer the invention of man as its substitute; the practical administration of which at the present time differs almost as much from that ordained by canon law as this does from the original institution of the Testator; notwithstanding an imposing and powerful hierarchy was then established, liberally supported to watch over its interests, and see that no innovations should be suffered to creep within its pale. One of the witnesses has complained that the people at large are lamentably ignorant of the nature of christening, and that multitudes are quite regardless of the obligations which it implies; I shall therefore give a more detailed account of its administration, by what is called the Establishment, than my learned friend has given.

But first I shall call your attention to the words god-father and god-mother, and I have no hesitation in saying that I do not understand their full import; to me they appear to imply an arrogation of Deity. But, whatever may be the meaning and import of the words, they have no foundation in Scripture; and every repetition of them is taking "the name of God in vain." I shall therefore in future call them sponsors, and proceed with the ministration.

"The people are to be admonished that it should be administered but upon Sundays and other holydays, when the most number of people come together, as every man present may be put in remembrance of his own profession. And the curates of every parish shall often admonish the people that they defer not the baptism of their children

longer than the first or second Sunday next after their birth. And also they shall warn them, that, without like great cause and necessity, they procure not their children to be baptized at home in their houses. But when need shall compel them so to do, let them not doubt but that the child so baptized is lawfully and sufficiently baptized. Yet, nevertheless, if the child, which is after this sort baptized, do afterwards live, it is expedient that it be brought into the church, to the intent that the congregation may be certified of the true form of baptism privately before used." These instructions I am told have been often disregarded; and Sundays and holidays are rarely preferred before other days, except by the poor, who make a convenience of them. The children of the opulent have been, without either great cause or necessity, christened privately at home, and not brought before the congregation. Again, the priest is commanded to take the child into his hands, and (if it may well endure it) he shall dip it into the water discreetly and warily; but if it be certified that the child is weak, it shall suffice to pour water upon it. These precepts are now wholly disregarded, sprinkling in all cases having superseded them. When the child is sprinkled in the church, the sponsors promise in the child's name to renounce the devil and all his works, only so long as it is under age; but in the ministration of private baptism there is no stipulation — the sponsors remain liable for the man: few, I dare say, either know, or mind, this further liability.

Sometimes great men request still greater men to become sponsors for their children; these perhaps have not the opportunity, or it may be have not the inclination, to attend themselves, they therefore name others to represent them; and thus the child becomes a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven, by the proxy of a proxy. It may sometimes happen, that the parties never see the child, either before or after the ceremony. This inconsistent conduct is winked at, as it principally occurs among the higher orders. Sometimes a child is accepted as a sponsor for a younger child. But

the church has in this case omitted to state whether the older child or its sponsors are the sureties, or whether all the parties are alike responsible.

It appears that the framers of the various administrations were fearful that the old vicious ceremony of christening, newly got up, would not at the time of the Reformation be readily received in all its parts; therefore, "to take away all scruple concerning the USE OF THE CROSS in baptism, the true explication thereof, and the just reason for retaining it, may be seen in the 30th canon, first published in the year 1604:" which no doubt was considered better authority than that of the Will itself. Then, lest any one should entertain a doubt of the future happiness of their children who die in infancy (which it was not unreasonable to question, from the corruption and sinfulness of that nature which they are said to bring with them into the world), they are told that it is certain, by God's word, that children which are baptized, dying before they commit actual sin, are undoubtedly saved." Some may wonder how it has happened that the passages of Scripture here alluded to have not been pointed out; but the reason is obvious, they are not to be found from the beginning to the end of the Bible. And now, Gentlemen of the Jury, let me seriously ask you what becomes of those unfortunate children who, through the neglect of their parents, or through any unavoidable cause, die without the benefit supposed to be attached to this ceremony? It being clearly evinced, by the hurried manner in which it is ordered to be performed over a dying child, that, should it expire before it is "lawfully and sufficiently baptized," its future happiness would, at least, be doubtful; for the first lawful minister that can be procured, is to "*say* the Lord's prayer, and so many of the collects appointed to be said before the form of public baptism as the time and present *exigence* will suffer," that is, so many of them as can be run over while life continues. It would be very hard and unjust, that a poor innocent should be condemned for a neglect that it could not prevent. But this cannot be, it being quite contrary to the tenor of both Testaments. In the Old it is expressly

said, "The son shall not bear the iniquity of his father;" and in the New, "Every man shall bear his own burden:— for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."* Infants cannot "sow to the flesh," consequently they are incapable of committing iniquity: and although they are, through Adam's transgression, subjects of physical evils even to the deprivation of their natural life, they cannot fall under condemnation, that being the consequence of actual personal transgression alone, of which they cannot be guilty. We are no where told in the Scriptures what will be the state of those who die in innocency; this is one of the "secret things" that "belong unto the Lord our God."† But we may rest assured, from his revealed Will, that he is "a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he;"‡ and that he, having created men to be happy, none can possibly be miserable but in consequence of their own wilful violation of his laws. It would be impious to suppose that infants and innocents should be otherwise than in a state of felicity throughout eternity, seeing that the Testator, through his death, has redeemed all from the power of the grave who have "not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression;" as well as from eternal death, all those who, though they have followed his example, and violated the commands of God, yet through grace have believed to life everlasting.

I am convinced that no man, who is capable of reasoning upon the subject, unless he suffers his understanding to be clouded by tradition, can *seriously* think that any thing done to or for an infant, by its parents or others, can affect its future state, or in any way influence the allwise and merciful Creator to place the child in a different position from that in which it would have stood if it had not been the subject of such a ceremony. The positive declaration of the word of God sets the matter at rest. "Behold (says he), all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine; the soul that sinneth it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the

* Gal. vi. 5, 7.

† Deut. xxix. 29.

‡ Deut. xxxii. 4.

father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.”*

In the two preceding methods of administering the rite called baptism, the command is positive, to dip in the one case, and pour water upon the child in the other; yet this command is now universally disregarded. Then comes a third, styled the “baptism of those of riper years;” and although this ought to be reckoned of greater moment than either of the other two, it is left to the discretion of the priest, either to dip the person or pour water upon him. Here, again, the priests show their contempt for the commands of the church, and merely sprinkle the individual. Indeed, the first method is become so obsolete, that, if I recollect right, when a candidate (arrived at manhood) expressed, some years ago, a desire to be dipped, it was thought necessary to ask the bishop’s consent before the ordinance could be administered in that way: but, perhaps this might be only a scheme of the priests, to obtain instruction how to administer the rite, the font in the church not being suitable for the purpose. These candidates, having arrived at years of discretion, are capable to answer for themselves; yet they, as in the case of infants, cannot be christened without the aid of sponsors, although, in addressing all present “as beloved,” the priests say, “doubt ye not, therefore, but earnestly believe, that he will favourably receive *these* present *persons*, *truly repenting*, and *coming unto him by faith*; that he will grant remission of their sins, and *bestow upon them* the *Holy Ghost*.” Surely, after thus repenting, believing, and receiving the gift of the Spirit, they might be suffered to go alone. But, no! The sponsors must be admonished thus: “Forasmuch as *these persons* have promised to renounce the devil and all his works, before you, their chosen witnesses, you must remember that it is your part and duty to put them in mind what a solemn vow, promise, and profession they have now made.” This is a strange proceeding; and I can only compare it to the manner in which, in some countries, a wild elephant is subdued, by placing him between two tame ones,

* Ezek. xviii. 4, 20.

who compel him to go with them. It must be confessed, this reclaiming of a human being is an improvement upon the method adverted to ; for in addition to a sponsor on each side to remind him of his own promises, they have one also to lead him. I know that it is highly improper to speak lightly on serious subjects ; but to deride a solemn mockery I have a precedent in Elijah, which precedent I shall think a sufficient justification, whenever I ridicule the proceedings of the plaintiffs or their witnesses. The prophet, when he was about to perform a miracle before four hundred and fifty of Baal's prophets, which they first attempted to do, but could not succeed, "mocked them, and said, Cry aloud, for he is a god : either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked."* So all who become sureties for infants, or chosen witnesses to direct the steps of another, with those that administer such unauthorised rites, must either suppose the Almighty to be asleep, or that he does not take cognizance of the profanation of his sacred ordinance.

It would be better for men not to vow more than they are able to perform : for the Will says, "When thou shalt vow a vow unto the Lord thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it ; for the *Lord will surely require it of thee.*† " It has been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shall perform to the Lord thine oaths : but I say unto you, Swear not at all."‡

It is not in the nature of things that these baptismal vows, as they are called, can be paid. I believe the fact is, they are seldom or ever thought of afterwards. As far as regards myself, I can speak positively ; for I do not recollect that I ever knew *even* the names of my sponsors, and yet I have been told that I was regularly christened. I have read in an old author, who was familiar with the Scriptures, that "infant sprinkling was entirely the work of man ; that the devil had no hand in it ; for it never entered into his head that mankind should ever become such fools as to be gulled by so absurd a thing."

* 1 Kings xviii. 27.

† Deut. xxiii. 21.

‡ Matt. v. 33, 34.

After the ceremony of christening a child, the sponsors are thus admonished: "Ye are to take care that this child be brought to the bishop, to be confirmed by him, so soon as he can *say* the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, in the vulgar tongue; and be further instructed in the Church Catechism, set forth for that purpose," part of which is as follows:—

Quest.—What is required of persons to be baptized?

Ans.—Repentance, whereby they forsake sin: and faith, whereby they stedfastly believe the promises of God, made to them in that sacrament.

Quest.—Why then are infants baptized, when by reason of their tender age they cannot perform them?

Ans.—Because they promise them both by their sureties: which promise, when they come of age, themselves are bound to perform.

Here it is clearly acknowledged, that the clause, "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved," must be fulfilled, before any one can show a claim to the promise. But in what a manner! The children are taught to lie, and say they promised by their sureties. The sureties promise for the child, but it is absurd to say the child promises by them, at a time when it cannot speak. And how are they to fulfil the promise made in their names? by being taught to SAY the Creed, &c.—as if repeating a creed could make a believer. It might be possible to make a parrot repeat all this, and then, on the same principle, it would be as good a Christian. My learned opponent tells you, he is very thankful that he belongs to a church, whose ministers declare that all whom they inter are heirs of the kingdom. I confess it has often struck me with surprise, how intelligent, conscientious men can recite the same words over all men indiscriminately, whatever their previous character may have been; "We commit his body (*i. e.* the body of our DEAR BROTHER) to the ground, in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life." This, to say the least of it, can be no incentive to the bystanders "to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world,"*

* Titus ii. 12.

seeing that *all* are in *like* manner consigned to the grave, "in sure and certain hope." And the facility with which a criminal, who confesses his crime, is passed into eternal glory, has brought forth the remark, that "Newgate is a railway to heaven."

"The knowledge of God cannot be learned by rote, nor taught by the mechanism of a creed." This can be obtained only by a sincere and diligent study of the Scriptures, with fervent prayer and supplication for the illumination of His Holy Spirit, to give his word access to the soul, by which the understanding is enlightened, and the individual is enabled to say, "I have more understanding than all my teachers; for thy testimonies are my meditation."*

One of the northern witnesses says, "there is an undefined and unsettled laxity of opinion in their southern brethren, which appears highly pernicious in its practical consequences; and that he has never been able to find any thing like fixed and precise ground among them, on which they place their warrant for baptizing, each party having different reasons, until they go so far as to concur with the established church, and administer it to all who apply." While the northern brethren, in their turn, make the salvation of the child to depend in measure on the faith of the parent; thus frustrating the will of the Testator. You will have observed, Gentlemen, that all the witnesses dwell much more upon the manner of applying the water (endeavouring to prove that it should be by sprinkling or pouring it on a child's face) than upon the import of the ordinance: all of them, except the second, third, and fourth, appearing wilfully blind to the positive requirement of previous faith, without which none can be scripturally baptized. Neither can any be acknowledged as heirs of the kingdom until they have believed to the saving of the soul, and have professed their faith in baptism. Baptism, as well as faith, being peremptorily required by the Testator.

I shall here beg leave to state, that in the course of my defence, and in answer to the plaintiffs' witnesses, I shall frequently have occasion to use the peculiar terms, words, and

* Psalm cxix. 99.

phrases which so often occur in the Will, on the right construction of which terms so much depends. Thus I shall often use the words Old and New Testament, Old and New Dispensation, the Scriptures, the Word of God, the Bible, &c. ; and, instead of the word Testator, the Son of God, our Lord, &c. And as I shall often refer you to the Will, I beg your most serious and unbiassed attention to its simple and plain import. You are not to be guided by detached passages solely, but are to judge of its true meaning by comparing one part of it with another, and by taking it as a whole. It was made with perfect skill and judgment, and its requirements are so plainly expressed by the Testator, that he has said, "the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein."*

The Will, as we now have it for general reading, not being in the language in which it was first published, it may be necessary that I should state to you, my Lord, and Gentlemen of the Jury,—not for your satisfaction, for you are well acquainted with the fact, but to remove any doubts upon the subject from the minds of those who have not the same opportunity of knowing,—that the correctness of our present translation is fully admitted by our opponents. The first witness they brought forward asserts this in the following manner:—"Those who have compared most of the European translations with the original, have not scrupled to say that the *English translation of the Bible, made under the direction of King James the First, is the most accurate and faithful of the whole*. Nor is this its only praise: the translators have seized the very *spirit* and *soul* of the original, and expressed this, almost every where, with pathos and energy. Besides, our translators have not only made a standard translation, but they have made their translation the standard of our language. The English tongue in their day was not equal to such a work—but God enabled them to stand upon Mount Sinai, and *crane* up their country's language to the dignity of the original; so that, after a lapse of two hundred years, the English Bible is, with very few exceptions, the standard of the purity and excellence of the English tongue. The *original*,

* Isaiah xxxv. 8.

from which it was taken, is alone superior to the Bible translated by the authority of King James." This is an opinion in which my heart, my judgment, and my conscience coincide.

"Notwithstanding all the helps which the various MSS. and ancient versions afford for the illustration of the sacred text," this court must not imagine "that in those MSS. and versions which do contain the *whole* of the sacred text, there is any essential defect in matters that relate to the *faith* and *practice*, and consequently to the salvation, of the Christian. There is no such MSS. ; there is no such *version*. So has the Divine Providence ordered it, that although a number of mistakes have been committed by careless *copyists*, as well as careless printers, not one ESSENTIAL TRUTH of God has been *injured or suppressed*. In this respect, all is *perfect* ; and the *way* of the Most High is made so *plain*, even in the poorest copies, that the wayfaring man, though a fool, *utterly destitute of deep learning and critical abilities, need not err therein*."

But independently hereof, Gentlemen, you and I, "who by reason of use have" our "senses exercised,"* having obtained perfect knowledge, and satisfied our minds, from the general tenor and bearing of the Will; and having sought divine aid and spiritual illumination, according to the way therein prescribed; have arrived at a satisfactory conclusion, amounting to an absolute certainty, that our cause is the cause of THE CHURCH, whereof it is said, "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."* We are convinced that the baptism which we practise is so clearly defined, that we deem the changes introduced, and so tenaciously defended, by the plaintiffs, not only an insult to the Testator himself, but an insult to common sense. I make these remarks, in consequence of several of the witnesses having attempted to defend their conduct herein by a different rendering of the Greek particles *εις* and *εκ*, connected with the word *βαπτίζω* ; which words, one and all of our opponents candidly admit, are correctly rendered in our English Bibles : and certainly our translators, who were, I believe, all Pædobaptists, would

* Heb v. 14.

† Matt. xvi. 18.

not have so rendered them in the places in question (in opposition to their own sentiments and practice), if without violence to the text they could have been otherwise rendered. So that I consider all appeals from our authorised version to the originals as nothing but paltry evasions, and futile attempts to bolster up a bad cause. Their boasted assertions, and the bold front which they assume, have not prevented the truth from occasionally breaking out; and although they "wrest" the meaning of the word baptize, "as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction;"* they are nevertheless all constrained to allow that my clients, by being put under water, are verily and truly baptized, agreeably to the true meaning, intent, and spirit of the commission. Is it possible, then, that the Lord should make use of a word of such ambiguous meaning, upon which depends our scriptural entrance into the church of Christ; a word by which the Testator points out the way in which he will have his disciples to follow him; that might be taken in senses so very opposite to each other as immersion and sprinkling? If it be so, the Psalmist could not have said, "The law of the Lord is perfect," for no man can understand it: but we shall shortly prove that the former only is its true, literal, and precise meaning. Yet were we even to admit that the word could be so rendered as to accord with the practice of our opponents, it would not help their cause, so long as they administered it by unauthorised agents to unqualified subjects. I shall therefore at present take no further notice of this method which our opponents have adopted of getting over their difficulties.

Now, Gentlemen, how are we to reconcile what the first witness says of the way of the Most High having been made so plain, with the evidence given by himself and his associates? Evidence so contradictory in itself, as demonstrates it unworthy of credit.

I might here, without proceeding another step, call upon you for your verdict; but I am desirous to take the opportunity which they have so gratuitously put into my power,

* 2 Pet. iii. 16.

to expose the fallacy of their reasoning. This I shall do with all plainness of speech and freedom of expression, without ceremony, and without fear or dread; notwithstanding the vituperation of one of the witnesses, who charges us with unchurching almost the whole world. To this charge we might plead guilty, disregarding the sentence which our opponents might pass upon us. But we deny the imputation; we do not unchurch those who differ from us; that entirely rests with themselves; they are the arbiters of their own state. We only show, by the Will, that THE CHURCH does not recognize them. Our showing this does not in any wise alter their position; for how is it possible to unchurch those, who, according to the prescribed rule, have never been received within its walls.

You will have observed, Gentlemen, that the Abrahamic covenant of circumcision appears to be the foundation upon which the plaintiffs build their superstructure of infant sprinkling. On this foundation they "build—wood, hay, stubble," materials which cannot stand the fiery test, which "shall try every man's work, of what sort it is."*

Circumcision and baptism are so totally different, that no inference can be drawn from the former for the observance of the latter. This I hope to make evident, to the satisfaction of the Court, when I enter upon the defence of my own principles respecting them; and shall, therefore, for the present, pass over all that my opponents have advanced upon this subject.

I shall now proceed to point out to you, in as concise a manner as my ability shall enable me, the conflicting evidence of the witnesses, in order that you may, at one view, see the weakness of their arguments, and how rarely it is that any two of them agree upon any one subject.

The FIRST WITNESS says, it is certain that βαπτω and βαπτίζω mean both dipping and sprinkling, both being legitimate forms. Those who are dipped, or immersed, he believes to be evangelically baptized.

The SECOND does not deny the lawfulness of baptizing by immersion in some cases, but not in all.

* 1 Cor. iii. 12, 13.

The FOURTH attaches no great importance to the question of immersion, or sprinkling, or pouring, but says that immersion is doubtless baptism.

The FIFTH says that baptism may be administered indifferently, either by sprinkling, affusion, or immersion, the mode is not of serious importance; the words βαπτω and βαπτίζω being capable of denoting any mode of washing.

The SIXTH does not *deny* that the verbs βαπτω and βαπτίζω signify to dip, or immerse; but is disposed to consider the mode of comparatively inferior importance. He has no hesitation in admitting, on certain grounds, immersion to be *valid* baptism, though he tells you that it is not the *scriptural* mode.

The SEVENTH says that there are many instances in which βαπτίζω signifies to immerse, that is to *pop in*, to plunge, or sink completely under water: and that the general understanding seems to be, that immersion is its original meaning. Speaking of the body of professors of which he is a member, he says that they find little or no fault with the *principles* and *practice* of Antipædobaptists, and that they have said, some of them at least, that immersion is no doubt baptism; that the careless and timid see that *all* allow immersion to be right; and that all allow that Antipædobaptists are themselves baptized. But the other mode (pouring out) he acknowledges is by some contested—therefore, says he, the *timid* prefer immersion, on the principle of taking the *safest* side of a difficult question.

The EIGHTH, that the *mode* of baptism is a *trivial* circumstance; the word βαπτίζω does not necessarily, nor constantly, signify to dip, but *frequently* signifies an application of water by sprinkling or pouring.

The NINTH, that against the doctrine that the *only* legitimate mode of baptizing is by immersion, he observes, there are SEVERAL STRONG PRESUMPTIONS, and that it is not a matter of surprise that such a comparative *trifle* as the mode of baptism should produce so much controversy.

The TENTH, that if βαπτίζω can be shown to signify sometimes *one* thing, and sometimes another; if it can be shown, in the New Testament, that it will neither bear to be trans-

lated to dip nor to sprinkle, when employed to express the ordinance of baptism;—if it signifies sometimes to dip and sometimes to sprinkle, baptism may be administered either way;—if it will neither bear to be translated to dip nor to sprinkle, it leaves us at liberty. So far as he can discern, βαπτίζω, is never in one instance translated to dip; yet he allows that a person may have ALL that is *essential* to baptism by being dipt.

Now, gentlemen, note these admissions !

The FIRST WITNESS says, that those that are immersed in water, he believes to be evangelically baptized.

The SECOND, that he does not deny the lawfulness of baptizing by immersion.

The FOURTH, that immersion is doubtless baptism.

The FIFTH, that baptism may be administered by immersion.

The SIXTH admits immersion, under certain circumstances, to be valid baptism.

The SEVENTH, that immersion is no doubt baptism.

The TENTH, that Pædobaptists maintain that a person may have all that is essential to baptism by being dipt.

And this is the evidence of men who have come before you to invalidate our claim; they have done their utmost to arraign the Will of the Testator, but they have shown themselves powerless, having been constrained to bear witness to the truth; their evil intention is turned against themselves; as it is written, “Surely the wrath of men shall praise thee.”* Our claim is established by the Will, and we need not that help which their consciences compel them reluctantly to afford us. Nevertheless, it shows you that our cause is founded upon a rock, “our enemies themselves being judges.”

I shall now point out to you their several opinions respecting baptism, and their reasons for departing from its correct observance.

The FIRST WITNESS said, That John baptized by *plunging* the body in water, seeing that he baptized in Jordan,

* Ps. lxxvi. 10.

because there was *much* water there. That Christ, being baptized, came *up out of* the water. And that there is a parallel case in Acts viii. 38. Philip and the Eunuch went *down into the water*, &c., but he said the reason of this was, none were baptized but those that were brought over from an *irreligious* religion to that of a true one. But that there is *no* place for this among us, who are *born* Christians. That the condition, therefore, being varied, the rite is not only *lawfully*, but *deservedly*, varied also. That, moreover, the *act* of immersion is so *harsh* and dangerous, that it *scarcely* gives place to *circumcision*; and besides, had John opened his commission in this country, he would have dipped neither man nor woman for many months in the year.

The FOURTH; If a few texts seem to allude to baptism by figures taken from immersion, how many speak of baptism of the Holy Spirit under the idea of pouring out upon us!

The FIFTH; Baptism is nowhere in the Scriptures *declared* to be immersion. It is unsuitable as an ordinance of public worship, particularly in a nation whose manners are like ours; there is a degree of *impropriety* in the practice, which is very *unhappy*, and of a nature very *unfortunate*, and *directly* opposed to *every* religious feeling, endangering the *health* and *life* of those who are so baptized. But these considerations, he acknowledges, form only a *presumptive* argument; and he adds, God has an *unquestionable right* to *require* us to undergo this *exposure*, or *any* other, according to his good pleasure.

The remarks of the SIXTH are intended to show, from the plain statements of the New Testament, that baptism was performed by sprinkling or pouring; and that if it were even admitted that immersion is the primary import of the word baptism, yet that sprinkling and pouring are uniformly recognized by the Scripture writers as its true and proper counterparts.

The SEVENTH declares, that Independents have not left this ordinance in so vague a condition as the Episcopalians have done; he throws quite a new light upon the subject,

and endeavours to show that the word baptize has never yet been properly analyzed; it has (says he) been shown to signify pouring out; and he remarks (and very truly), that "there is a difficulty of conceiving how so extraordinary a transition should have taken place, as that of the derivative *pouring out*, from the primitive *plunging in*." But being wedded to the mode of *pouring upon*, he substitutes the word "pop," his definition of which sets all argument at defiance; for, according to his view, it means ornamenting and bespattering, washing away what was found adhering, or covering with what was not there before; in short, that it means every mode by which water and dirt can be applied, as well as immersion, wholly or in part.

This Witness does not know if any thing is to be found, among all the *corruptions* and enormities of an *idol's* temple, equal to an immersion before the church; and he "certainly thinks" our "baptism to be the human improvement of a *superstitious* age, and to partake of all the *monstrosity* in its form, and all the cruelty—which might be expected from such an origin."

The EIGHTH *pretends* to no certainty that John did *not* baptize at all, but thinks it *possible* he might use *both* modes. He tells you, that baptism was no new institution; and that should immersion be allowed to have been the *only* ancient, apostolic, and scriptural mode of baptizing, yet a strict adherence to it is not obligatory on us, but that this circumstance may very *lawfully* and *fitly* be exchanged for that of sprinkling or pouring. To imagine (says he) that our Lord intended absolutely and *immutably* to *bind* down his followers to dipping *only*, is quite *repugnant* to that mild, generous, and free spirit which his religion everywhere breathes. Total immersions, he observes, are *troublesome*, a *scarcely* modest and *decent* practice, and, in many cases, *cruel* and *dangerous*; and that it would be rash and *criminal* for a minister to immerse the *most* worthy, as he could not do it without apparent hazard, not only to his *own* life, but to that of the baptized. If, therefore, baptism should (says he) become ODD and UNBECOMING, or hazardous to the health, it might

then *innocently* be waived, and a form less *burdensome* and disagreeable be substituted.

The NINTH tells you “that baptism was no new ordinance; and that since the Scriptures have not determined how it is to be administered, the mode may be prescribed by a church.” He denies that a *single clear* case of baptism by immersion can be produced from the New Testament; that not *one* instance can be shown of that practice from it. He designates it *harsh*, showing no consideration to health nor life—opposed to *decency*, repulsive to the feelings, dangerous to health, offensive to delicacy, and destitute of all scriptural authority.

Gentlemen, you have heard all the harsh epithets which these witnesses have applied to the baptism of the Scripture. It is (say they) superstitious, monstrous, immodest, unbecoming, indecent, rash, criminal, dangerous, hazardous to health, repulsive to the feelings, and offensive to decency. What is the object which they have in view in thus scandalizing the ordinance of the Lord, by which he was himself sanctified for the work appointed him of his Father; and which, by his own observance, he sanctioned? Is it not their design to throw discredit upon the ordinance itself, to raise a dust to blind the eyes of their votaries, and, by thus representing it in an odious light, to draw off their attention from the main argument? The question is not whether it be all that they represent it, but whether it be or be not the command of God—whether the way we practise the ordinance be or be not according to the Divine precept and example. The majority of these witnesses, as you have heard, acknowledge our practice to have all the essentials of baptism; and if it have, how dare they to designate it in the manner before stated? They wilfully depart from the plain, simple, and express command, and obstinately persevere in their violation of it. And, not content with so doing, they throw opprobrium upon the conduct of the Lord himself, who unquestionably was baptized with the baptism which they thus vilify. And here I will ask these bold men, how they will stand before his

bar, when he shall reprove them and set these things in order before their eyes?

Three of the witnesses, you observe, find the ground they had taken untenable; they therefore shift it. The FIRST says, that "the condition being varied (*i. e.* we being all BORN CHRISTIANS), the right is not only lawfully, but deservedly, varied also." The EIGHTH says, that "should immersion be allowed to have been the only mode, a strict adherence to it is not obligatory on us." The NINTH, that "even if immersion had been the original mode, we should, in the absence of any command, direct or implied, have thought the church at liberty to accommodate the mode—to different climates and manners."

The Testator pronounces the most dreadful anathemas upon those who either add to, or take from, his words. Josiah was praised above all the kings of Judah; and for what? because "he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord; and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left."* But the plaintiffs, instead of taking him for an example, speak after the manner of Naaman, though in a more positive way. He only asked, "Are not Abana and Pharphar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel?" But they presumptuously assert, that "sprinkling of water is as sufficient as the dipping into water, when in truth that argues washing and purification as well as this." Not to obey, is to withdraw ourselves from that allegiance which we profess to owe to our Governor. Not to submit to his laws with a child-like disposition, is in fact to arraign him before our bar, and tell him what is just and right that he should enjoin, and that if it be not according to our tastes, we are determined not to obey him. To reject his ordinance, because we consider it not suitable to our country, is only to oppose our shallow reasoning to his wisdom and authority. The Will informs us that Eve placed more reliance on the father of lies, than she did upon the God of truth; he said, "Ye shall not surely die;" therefore she eat of the forbidden fruit, and we her children are still suffering

* 2 Kings xxii. 2.

in consequence of that one act of disobedience. And we have thousands of living witnesses around us to prove, that a people which God had chosen for himself lost their earthly inheritance by their disobedience; a sufficient proof to us that none will be held blameless who profane his ordinance, whether through ignorance or design. As "all men in this country are supposed by one of its maxims to know what is the law, and as alleged ignorance will not exempt them from punishment if they transgress," so every one that has the Will, and can read it, will be left without excuse.

We read that the "people and the *Publicans* justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John." But that "the Pharisees and Lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him."* But we nowhere read that the latter, or that even the chief priests, the elders, or the scribes found any fault with the nature of his ordinance; they would not believe that it was from heaven, neither would they believe that Jesus Christ was the Son of God. They accused him of blasphemy, and, judging him to be guilty of death, they slew him. By this it appears that their actions were in unison with their words; but can we say this of the witnesses in this cause? No; on the contrary, they profess to acknowledge him as their Redeemer, and that the ordinance of baptism was from heaven, but instead of justifying God, as the *Publicans* did by being baptized, they not only reject his counsel, but "they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame,"† by calling his ordinance of baptism, as administered by John and the disciples (as before stated), harsh and dangerous; unsuitable as an ordinance of public worship; a subject which cannot be expatiated upon; directly opposed to every religious feeling; endangering health and life; an enormity not to be found among all the corruptions and enormities of an idol's temple; the human improvement of a superstitious age; a monstrosity; repugnant to the mild spirit of the gospel, troublesome, scarcely modest, cruel and dangerous, criminal, hazardous to the life

* Luke vii. 29, 30.

† Heb. vi. 6.

of both baptizer and baptized ; harsh, shewing neither consideration to health nor life ; *opposed to decency*, repulsive to the feelings, dangerous to health, offensive to delicacy, destitute of scriptural authority ; a pious cheat, a pitiful cause ; and even preparing for it in the house of God an abomination. Yet, Gentlemen, can you believe it possible that some of these very men will invite those whose practice they thus condemn to preach in their pulpits ; to assist at the ceremony of opening any newly erected place of worship ; and to offer up the *ordination prayer* at the induction of any of their own ministers into their churches. But this is only a part of their inconsistency ; they carry it still further, by addressing those whom they accuse of idolatrous worship, in the following manner ; “ My dear and respected Antipædobaptist brethren ; *Fellow-Christians* ; Godly persons ; Our brethren ; Christians of the Antipædobaptist persuasion ; Excellent Christian characters ; We regard many of you as *saints* and *faithful* in Christ Jesus ; Let us receive one another, and live together in perfect charity.” Why it would be quite as appropriate to apply these soothing expressions to the priests of Juggernaut, and invite some of them to assist at their ordinations. You will naturally ask, Why do they use this charitable, fawning language ? I will tell you ; They have found they cannot silence us by scriptural argument, nor yet by vituperative epithets, and they are now attempting to cajole us by flattery : thus tacitly acknowledging that those they call their baptist brethren are right. It is clear, by their evidence, that neither their own nor their converts’ consciences are at ease respecting this ordinance. One admits that all allow immersion to be right, but that sprinkling is contested, and that the *timid* join the Antipædobaptists on the principle of taking the safest side — of (“ what the sophistry of men have made ”) a difficult question. One, that the advocates of immersion are *often very* troublesome to their *fellow-Christians*, and unsettle *weak* minds. One acknowledges that when the controversy, “ whether baptism should be administered to infants, or only to adults,” fell in his way, he was *almost*

ready to conclude that the Antipædobaptists were right, and that this gave him *great* uneasiness. Another feels satisfied that the *validity* of infant affusion is not so *difficult* and formidable as many are ready to suppose, by the numberless volumes that have been written upon it; but that there are *too* many, when, in a state of *want* of knowledge, they happen to meet with a baptist friend, a baptist book, or a baptist argument, feel themselves unprepared to meet what is *new* and *startling*; their minds are in danger of being immediately unsettled, and of hastily adopting what is presented to them with *no little* plausibility, and *possibly* too with much *imposing* consequence. Another is aware that many have been long ago shouting victory, and admits that Antipædobaptist sentiments are making considerable progress; he allows that *Christians* are actually beginning to despair of any result from the existing controversy, and that it should humble us all (*i. e.* "those that are in error") to see the battle continuing to rage without the smallest appearance of termination. If this witness had been familiar with the Will, he would have known that the battle will continue to rage, and with increasing success, until "the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ."* Then those that have believed on the Lord, and followed him in all the ordinances of his house, according to the *simple* and *plain* direction given in his word, will join, and *cry Victory* with a voice as loud as to reach the ends of the earth. Even now, he is sensible that the united voices of the *antichristian* world cannot silence their victorious shouting. Another tells you, that "Many *pious* but *weak* minds have been *greatly disturbed*, not to say *distressed*, with *scruples* on *this* head. When they hear it *confidently* affirmed, that baptism evermore and constantly implies dipping—that no person ever was, or can be baptized, who has not been dipt—and, consequently, that themselves are as really unbaptized as Pagans or Turks, it fills them with concern; and they *doubt* whether they are not wanting in obedience to an EXPRESS command and insti-

* Rev. xi. 15.

tution of Christ." Why are these weak and pious people so distressed? And why these doleful lamentations on their behalf? Are none of these *learned doctors* able to set their minds at ease, and extinguish their doubts and fears? No! For the effulgence of the light as it shines in the Will still continues to penetrate the mists and clouds with which they, by sophistry and perverted logic, have environed it. This light, after it strikes the eyes of *pious* people, occasions (so long as they retain any regard for the Will) pain and misgivings of heart. But respect for the word of God, Gentlemen, is represented by my learned opponents as weakness in those who are affected by it; and it is only when these *weak* people are emboldened through their writings or discourses to set the Will aside, that they deserve, in their estimation, to rank with those who have become "strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might."*

The Tenth and last WITNESS informs you, That *common* and *conscious* men are deluded with the *dogmas* of dipping; that many good and gracious souls, who cannot READ GREEK, and do not remember that John baptized with water in the same way that the disciples were baptized with the Holy Ghost, are led away with the delusion." Here, Gentlemen, you have a new doctrine, a sweeping condemnation of the great bulk of mankind: for how few there are, who have now the word of God in their hands, that can read Greek. Is it then necessary, Gentlemen, to understand Greek to be preserved from delusion? We apprehend the learned witness is under a greater delusion than many of those whom he thus denounces. "*Not many* wise men after the flesh—are called."

This Witness accuses my clients of not honestly quoting case from the Book of Common Prayer, which authorizes sprinkling only. But as we have already stated the "Ministration of Baptism," as prescribed by the Church of England in that book, the above charge of disingenuousness, therefore, will not apply to us. In it there is no authority to sprinkle either

* Eph. vi. 10.

child or man. Sprinkling is a manifest departure from the rule laid down by the church. I am glad, however, that this accusation has been made, as it gives me an opportunity of pointing out to all parents, members of that Establishment, the wrong its ministers have done, and are doing, to all their children, by christening them in an illegal manner: for if parents believe the Prayer Book, their children's eternal happiness is jeopardized—not *one*, so christened, being **LAWFULLY** and **SUFFICIENTLY** baptized. Consequently, the parents cannot partake of the assurance, that "It is certain by God's Word, that children which are" lawfully baptized, "dying before they commit sin, are undoubtedly saved." They must, if they read with attention, know that it is very particular in this respect; for it says, when a child has been christened at home, and "do afterwards live, it is expedient that it be brought into the church, to the intent that the congregation may be certified of the *true* form of baptism, privately used—and the minister shall examine and try whether the child be lawfully baptized or no.—Because, *some* things **ESSENTIAL** to this sacrament *may* happen to be omitted, through *fear* or *haste*, in such times of *extremity*.—But if the minister shall find all is" not "*well* done," nor "according to **DUE ORDER**, then let the priest baptize it, in the form before appointed for public baptism of infants; saving that, at the **DIPPING** of the child in the font, he shall use this form of words—*If thou art not already baptized*, I baptize thee, &c." Therefore, by the laws of the Church, no healthy child can be legally christened without being dipt, neither can one that is "privately baptized," and "do afterwards live," be reckoned lawfully baptized, unless its true form of baptism be certified in the church, before the congregation. How this can be called a more enlightened age, which sets both the law of God and man at defiance, I am at a loss to imagine!

The last Witness admits that there is no single word in the English language which comes up to the full meaning of the verb βαπτίζω; and that it is the only word which the Spirit of God employs to express the ordinance of baptism.

He says, that "in all the accounts he can find of this matter, the particular mode in which men were baptized with the Holy Ghost, was not by dipping, or any thing resembling it, but by pouring out, and falling upon; and that this is just sprinkling in other words." I wonder he would thus expose himself; for every body in the Court must know, that pouring out and sprinkling are two as distinct and different operations as pouring out and baptizing. In fact, if he were not sensible that his cause rests upon an unstable foundation, he would not have attempted to screen himself under the cloak of charity. He acknowledges, that if all the baptisms mentioned in the New Testament had been administered in Jordan, or by the side of rivers, he would have thought it a strong circumstance; but that when he does not read that any came up from any water, after the ascension of the Testator, except the Eunuch, this last shadow of proof vanishes as the morning cloud and as the early dew. Is this a legitimate conclusion, Gentlemen? If all the instances of baptism recorded in the New Testament had been mentioned as administered in Jordan, or by the side of a river, it would afford, in his view, presumptive evidence in our favour; but because this is omitted, excepting in one instance, in all the cases that took place after our Lord's ascension, all that occurred previously are therefore to be disregarded as of no authority? In all the places where there is given a detailed account of the circumstances attendant on baptism, they agree in the same particulars, that there was abundance of water, that the parties went down into it, and came up out of it. Particulars sufficient, and sufficiently often repeated, to satisfy every humble follower of the Testator that, in the places where they are omitted, the omission does not infer any departure from the ordinance as previously administered. Let our opponents deny this if they can; but let them remember, they must give us scriptural authority for their objections.

Now, Gentlemen, mark the incongruous statements of these Witnesses respecting baptism, and the origin of its institution!

The TENTH *humbly thinks* the doctrine of dipping cannot be proved from the Bible.

The FIRST brought forward four incontrovertible proofs from the Bible that plunging the body in water was the baptism commanded by the commission; and said, that in several respects it was a new thing in Judea.

The NINTH denies that a *single clear case* of baptism by immersion can be produced from the New Testament; and says, that baptism was not a new ordinance.

The SEVENTH says, that baptism was a new ordinance.

The THIRD, that Christ adopted baptism.

The EIGHTH says that it was practised ages before the birth of John.

The SECOND, that it was not instituted until after the time of John.

The FIETH, that baptism is nowhere in the Scriptures declared to be immersion.

The FOURTH, that immersion is doubtless baptism. And that "John was singular in baptizing all his disciples, though baptism had been before in use."

The SIXTH, that baptism was performed by *sprinkling* or *pouring*.

The SEVENTH, that *pouring upon* was the *only* scriptural mode.

The EIGHTH, that dipping was not the only mode.

The last three are Independents; and be it remembered that one of them declared that his community had not left this ordinance in so vague and ambiguous a condition as Episcopalians or Presbyterians have left it; and this is the way they have taken to convince us that they have not done so. Now I will ask any of this persuasion, whether in or out of Court, which of the three things, dipping, sprinkling, or pouring upon, is the baptism instituted by the Testator? and, if he trusts to these teachers, I defy him to answer the question. Every wise man, hearing this evidence, will leave such teachers to themselves, and neither adopt sprinkling, pouring, nor dipping, until he learns, from the Will itself, what baptism really is, what it is to believe, and what it is to be

enabled to say, with the Eunuch, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. What does hinder me to be baptized?"

Their contradictory statements give us reason to conclude that they are "not taught of God," otherwise they would speak one language, "the language of Canaan:" as it is written, "I will turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with *one consent*."* Agreeably to this, Paul, writing to the Corinthians, says, "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that YE ALL SPEAK THE SAME THING; and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together IN THE SAME MIND, AND IN THE SAME JUDGMENT."†

You will recollect, Gentlemen, that the evidence of the SEVENTH WITNESS differs from that of all the others. He tells you that he "is persuaded that the word baptize has never been properly analyzed"—that it has been substituted for the verb *pop*—that he feels himself supported in affirming that the term *pop* is the root of the word—and that when the Court keeps in mind his explanation, and applies it to baptism, *poptism*, it will be furnished with a key which will naturally and consistently account for all its much-disputed acceptations. And further, "We are led to conceive (says he) of baptism, as the pouring out of water from a cup on the turned-up face of the baptized; and whether he be adult or in infancy, the water may thus not only wet the surface, as a *figure* of washing, but be drunk into the mouth, as the emblem of a principle of new life." Here, Gentlemen, we have a new light thrown upon the ordinance; and I will leave it to you to suggest to this witness, if it would not be an improved and more effectual plan to *pop* the water at once into the mouth; for if it be necessary that it should be drunk in order to complete the figure, it ought not to be left to chance, whether or not the parties may at the time open their mouths.

The NINTH WITNESS said, that baptism was no new ordinance when our Lord instituted it.

* Zeph. iii. 9.

† 1 Cor. i. 10.

When we consider that the Testator has attached so much importance to his ordinance, we may rest assured that he has declared his will in language that cannot be mistaken. To suppose it possible that he could give a commission to his apostles, on subjects involving the eternal happiness of all mankind, in terms so undefinable, ambiguous, and uncertain, as these Witnesses wish to make it appear, is not only preposterous, but it is a reflection on his wisdom and providence.

One and all of them allow that baptism is, according to the tenor of the Will, required of every professed follower of Christ; yet they not only will not practise it, but they vilify it in every possible way that their ingenuity can devise. Still they are not content without substituting something in its place; for they are not satisfied that the eternal felicity of either man or child is secured unless he be christened before he dies. Thus they presumptuously dare to change the ordinance, and adopt substitutes, upon which they are neither uniform nor agreed.

It is pitiable to think that people will allow themselves to be kept in bondage by such men as these; men who promulgate a spurious doctrine, and practise a mock rite. It may be said of these priests, as Jeremiah said of the priests of his time, "They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace."* They also "beguile" them "with enticing words, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."† Both the teachers and the taught would do well to study Deut. xxxii. 28, 29.

Gentlemen, you have heard our Lord accused of not knowing, or not considering, that his ordinance is in many respects unsuitable for the people of the present day, particularly for those inhabiting cold countries; and his wisdom impugned for not naming the degree of latitude where baptism should cease, and sprinkling commence. One told you that we may rest assured that our climate, or a more northerly

* Jer. vi. 14.

† Col. ii. 4, 8.

one, could not admit of it with safety for at least three-fourths of the year; and that as dipping was a rite used only among the Jews, it were hard if all nations should be subject under it, especially when it is not to be esteemed of the essence of baptism. Another, that he did not see the necessity of it in all cases. Another, that the quantity of water and mode of application seem to be merely circumstances, varying as occasion may require. Another, that in a nation whose manners are like those of the United States of America, and where bathing is not a standing custom, there is a degree of *impropriety* in the practice. Another, that total immersions in England are *cruel* and *dangerous*; and to imagine that our Lord intended *absolutely* and immutably to *bind down* his followers of all nations and of all ages to the Jewish form of baptizing (supposing it to have been dipping only), is quite repugnant to that mild and free spirit which his religion everywhere breathes. Another, that it is not *probable* that, in a religion designed to be universal, a mode of administering the ordinance should be obligatory, the practice of which is ill adapted to so many climates, where it would be *exceedingly* harsh to immerse male and female, strong and feeble, in water (and in the higher latitudes for a great part of the year *impossible*), since it is certain that, in countries where cold bathing is little practised, *great* risk of both health and life are *often* incurred, and fatal effects do *sometimes* occur. Now, Gentlemen, you will please to observe how manfully the SEVENTH Witness again withstands the others. He before showed to them and us, that neither sprinkling nor pouring could be derived from the verb βαπτίζω; and he here declares that cold bathing is a bracer and a luxury, and that in his opinion no *great* hardship could be experienced in ANY climate were the practice enjoined *every day*: and he is sure that it would be an EXTRAORDINARY constitution which could not at any age WELL ENDURE to be plunged once in one's life time. Yet notwithstanding this his candid admission, he goes beyond the other nine in *degrading* the ordinance, by saying that he does not know if there be such

an enormity to be found, as an immersion before the church and before the world, among all the corruptions of an idol's temple.

These Witnesses remind me of the tale of Mahomet and the pig. The prophet told his followers that one part of it was not to be eaten, thinking that that would prevent their eating any part. But it had the contrary effect; for one chose one part, and another, another part, until the whole pig was eaten; still each one flattered himself that he had left the prohibited part untouched. But these people, more inconsistent than even the followers of Mahomet, reject the ordinance of baptism, as being unsuitable to this or that climate, because, in their wisdom, they deem it not suited to every climate.

And yet, Gentlemen, these Witnesses, who revile the ordinance of the Testator in such unmeasured terms, would have us believe that they are true followers of the precepts of that Will, which points out no other 'way of of salvation' than that of believing to the saving of the soul; making manifest that faith, in the first instance, by a public profession thereof in the ordinance of baptism as therein inculcated, and ever afterwards walking as "becometh the gospel of Christ." The conduct of these men is aptly described by the prophet, "They swear by the name of the Lord, and make mention of the God of Israel, but not in truth nor in righteousness."* The Testator exhorts, persuades, and advises all men to "turn at his reproof," to obey his laws, to respect his ordinances, and trust in him; and promises that "he that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved." On the other hand, he warns and threatens, and also declares, that the "fearful, and unbelieving—and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone."† He has given no discretionary power to change his ordinances: having made baptism the only way of entrance into his house, it is BINDING on all those who are desirous of partaking of its privileges. They have it in their power to reject it, as the plaintiffs do; and in

* Is. xlviii. 1.

† Rev. xxi. 8.

this respect he leaves them to their own free choice (as it is written, I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that thou and thy seed may live); declaring that "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in *through the gates* into the city;"* but that "Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully;"—"that maketh the blind to wander out of the way."

Is there not, Gentlemen, great perversity in the reasoning of the Witnesses, who condemn as dangerous that which is performed in obedience to a divine command; and which is generally allowed to invigorate the constitution when used as a matter of pleasure, or for healthy recreation?

I now, Gentlemen, call your attention to the evidence given on John iii. 22, 23.

The EIGHTH WITNESS does not apprehend that John baptized the multitudes by dipping; he says, "there were other necessary and important uses for many waters—other weighty and just causes why John should choose this *well watered* and fruitful country for the scene of his ministration."

The TENTH says that "it never occurs to our opponents that Judea was a country parched with thirst; that John preached in a place proper for accommodating the multitudes which flocked to him; that such a multitude must assemble in a *wilderness*, or they would destroy their neighbours' property; and that such a multitude, assembled in a wilderness, must have much water to drink, or they would die of thirst. They think of Judea as if it were Great Britain; and because none baptize in rivers now but dip-pers, they think it must have been so then."

The SEVENTH, that "he sees nothing concerning immersion, but a plain reason why two large companies should have been attracted to the neighbourhood of each other, where they might act without interference, whilst separately engaged in making the same religious use of water."

The FOURTH, that "Water was the outward sign; but

* Rev. xxii. 14.

whether the rite was administered by immersion or not is incapable of decisive proof."

The NINTH, that "the preaching was in the fields; and since the rite which was to follow a ministry which made such impression, and drew together such crowds, *was baptism*, the necessity of the case must lead the Baptist to Jordan, or to some other district where, if a river was wanting, fountains at least existed. The necessity was equal in this case, whether the mode of baptism were that of aspersion, of pouring, or of immersion."

The FIRST, that "whether the ceremony was performed by dipping or sprinkling, much water was equally necessary, when such multitudes were baptized; but as the Jewish custom required the person to stand in the water, and having been instructed, and entered into a covenant to renounce all idolatry, and take the God of Israel for their God, then plunge themselves under water, it is probable that the rite was thus performed in Ænon."

These contradictory assertions are made on these plain words; "After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judea; and there he tarried with them, and baptized. And John also was baptizing in Ænon, near to Salim, BECAUSE there was MUCH water there: and they came and were baptized." Four of the witnesses have not ventured to speak upon this text; and the plaintiffs' cause would not have suffered loss if the other six had followed their example. Their conflicting statements show that they do not, or pretend not to, understand the passage. One says—John chose a fruitful country; another, that it was a wilderness he chose; another, that the Testator and John chose this place that they might act without interfering with each other; while two insist that whether the ceremony was performed by dipping or sprinkling, much water was equally necessary. The reasons given by the three former are directly at variance with each other; and the reasons of the last two are eminently absurd, for they, as well as you and I, know that a few pails of water, used as sparingly as it is at the present day, would suffice to have

sprinkled all the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And another asserts that it cannot be proved whether or not John immersed his converts.

One of them charges us with ignorance of the nature of the land and climate of Judea, which he represents as a country parched with thirst. We, in our turn, Gentlemen, charge him with ignorance of the book of God, which describes it in different language, as "a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills. A land of wheat and barley, and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive, and honey."*

We are clearly and positively informed that John chose this place solely on account of there being *much water* there, for the convenience of baptizing those that believed the gospel; and none of the witnesses have dared to gainsay it. Indeed only one of them gave an opinion of the nature of the religious use the "two large companies made of water," and the Scriptures furnish us with no foundation for this opinion as we have no instance mentioned in the Will of any person baptizing himself. Here, Gentlemen, I cannot refrain from remarking that the evidence of this witness is partial. He it was who told you, that he had not studied the Bible as a text book to confirm the articles of a preconceived creed, but as the revelation from God to man; and that he came before you to give his evidence as *free from bias and sectarian principle* as possible. Now I have no hesitation in saying, and I am persuaded it is also the opinion of the court, that in this instance at least, he has departed from his avowed principles; for where can we find in the whole compass of the Will, so much as the shadow of authority for that which he attributes to the disciples of John, and those of our Lord, the act of "plunging themselves under water." Is it not evident from this that he has read the Will with a strong bias of tradition on his mind; that he not only speaks under the influence of prejudice, but that the strong enmity he bears to the ordinance of our Lord is hereby manifested? For though he is compelled to admit that the only legitimate

* Deut. viii. 7. 8.

use of the much water of *Ænon* could be solely for the purpose of administering the ordinance of baptism, yet, like the Scribes, who said that our Lord cast out devils by Beelzebub, so he says the converts were not plunged by John, but that they plunged themselves.

I shall here read an extract from a recent publication, which, being written by a Vicar of the Church of England, shows you that the ministers of that communion are beginning to see that they are not acting in accordance with their own rubric: and let us hope, Gentlemen, that this is only a prelude to their seeing, that, even if they were so acting, they would not be acting in conformity with the Will, and that when they are led to see their error, they may be brought to acknowledge it, and no longer prostitute the sacred ordinance of the Testator.

‘My object (says he) is to restore this act of consecration (baptism) to its original design,—to render it a solemn and sacred dedication to God. It has been very generally considered, within the last three hundred years, that it makes no difference whether it be done by sprinkling, or affusion, or washing the body in pure water. Nor is the washing the body in pure water a point of mere indifference. The form and mode of initiation into the church of Christ are in their consequences of high and solemn importance—in regard to baptism, the outward and visible sign becomes an integral part of the ordinance itself. The custom of the primitive church gives no sanction to baptism by affusion or sprinkling, except in cases of necessity. In the reign of Elizabeth, immersion came by degrees into disuse; and Calvin directs that the minister should pour water upon the infant, and this was the first public form of baptism which prescribed affusion. The Salisbury Missal, printed in 1530, expressly requires and orders dipping. And in the first Common Prayer Book of Edward VI. the general order is to dip the child—the rubric only allowing, if it be weak—it shall suffice to pour water upon it. However, it being allowed to weak children, many fond ladies at first, and then by degrees the common people, would persuade the minister that their children were

too tender for dipping. But what principally tended to confirm this practice was, that several of our English divines flying into Germany and Switzerland during the bloody reign of Queen Mary, and returning home when Elizabeth came to the throne, brought back with them a great love and zeal to the customs of those Protestant churches beyond sea. They thought they could not do the Church of England a greater service than to introduce a practice sanctioned by so great an oracle as Calvin. Afterwards, when the directory was put out by the Parliament, effusion began to have a show of establishment, it being declared not only lawful, but sufficient and most expedient, that children should be baptized by pouring or sprinkling of water on their face; and, as it were for the further prevention of immersion or dipping, it was particularly provided that baptism should not be administered in places where fonts in time of Popery were unfitly and superstitiously placed; and accordingly they changed the font into a basin, which being brought to the minister in his reading desk, and the child being below him, he dipped in his fingers, and so took up water enough just to let a drop or two fall on the child's face. Our divines, at the restoration, understanding a little better the sense of Scripture and antiquity, again restored the order for immersion.

'The very word baptize properly means to wash a person in water, by dipping or immersion. It is evident that it was by this mode that John baptized all who came to him, and that their bodies were washed with water. There can be no question but that John himself, and those who were baptized of him, went into the water, "they were baptized of him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins." And it is said of Jesus, "that he went up straightway out of the water."—"John also was baptizing in Ænon, because there was much water there." We cannot but infer that in these cases their bodies were actually washed, and we find that the same mode of admitting new converts into the covenant of grace was continued. The word baptism has, no doubt, sometimes figuratively another meaning; but as to the

admission into the church, it implies that the body was washed with water. It was in this manner that the Eunuch was baptized. It has been contended, in opposition to all authority, that no particular direction being given in Scripture, we may allow immersion, affusion, or aspersion to be equally valid. Such observations have been made more to confirm a custom that has unwarily crept into the church, than to maintain the truth itself. But this is not the way to preserve the church in its primitive and pure state. To keep it pure, we must appeal to "the law and to the testimony."—There can be no doubt but the word baptize implies more than affusion or sprinkling; and that it means to wash or bathe. Nor is such baptism to be considered as a mere point of indifference. There is great reason to infer that the ordinance of baptism in latter times has been greatly degraded—in many churches, especially in the Church of England (in opposition to the rubric of that church), from the very circumstance of sprinkling being so commonly received; and from this circumstance also it has lost much of its solemnity as a sacrament of Christ.

'It is but too evident that the mode of baptism by sprinkling has—degenerated to "a mere form of godliness, without the power thereof." In all ordinary cases,—although—we know the practice is widely different, it (the rubric) presumes that the child is baptized by immersion. In point of fact, it is generally allowed by all who have attended to the question, that immersion was in all ordinary cases the received mode of Christian baptism in the primitive church.—They (the fathers) speak of "the immersion in water as a descent into the grave, and the rising again out of the water as a resurrection from the dead." They refer to the words of the apostle, Rom. vi. 4, 6, and Col. ii. 12. There is another point in respect to baptism which is of very high moment, that it be ministered in public. The church of Christ has observed it from the beginning as a public act. It is evident that the baptism of Christ and the baptism of John were always observed as public acts.*

* T. H. Kingdon, B. D.

Thus it has been publicly stated by a minister of the Establishment, that the ordinance of baptism in latter times has been greatly DEGRADED—ESPECIALLY IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND. But if the learned Divine had delayed his publication a little longer, he might have given such a striking proof of this as no good Churchman even could gainsay. I refer to the sprinkling of the wife of the Michigan Chief, Mak Coonse, who died at Lambeth; and who, according to the newspapers, “was received into the *Christian Church*, and baptized on Sunday morning (Jan. 22d, 1835), a few hours before death, by the name of Antoinette O Whow O Qua.” If any of you, Gentlemen, have not heard of this circumstance, you will naturally presume that she was, according to the twenty-seventh Article, christened as “a sign of regeneration, or new birth.” But no such thing; she was christened ‘in consequence of the apprehensions of the chief that she would not be buried as became her station!’ *i. e.* in the church-yard, as a DEAR SISTER. Contrast the conduct of this poor, ignorant, superstitious creature, with that of a clergyman of the Church of England. She, a Pagan, chose to die, rather than offend (as she thought) the Great Spirit, by taking medicine with the intention of evading his summons. He, calling himself a Christian minister, chose to transgress the law of his church, by which he had sworn to be guided, rather than hurt the pride of an Indian Chief. (And, for any thing we know to the contrary, with the sanction of the heads of the church, for you will recollect, Gentlemen, this occurrence took place at LAMBETH!) The law runs as follows; “When any such persons as are of riper years are to be baptized, timely notice shall be given to the bishop, or whom he shall appoint for that purpose, a week before *at the least*, by the parents, or some other discreet persons, that so due care may be taken for their examination whether they be *sufficiently* instructed in the principles of the Christian religion; and that they may be exhorted to prepare themselves with prayers and fastings for the receiving of this holy sacrament.”

On this, the Record Newspaper, of the 12th February,

makes the following remark. ‘But if the case were one of such extremity that a week’s notice was impossible, and this is a circumstance not provided for by the Rubric, did the poor Indian express a desire to be admitted into the Christian Church? did she answer the questions appointed to be asked? or was not the ceremony merely intended as a passport to what is called Christian burial in consecrated ground? We (says the Record) think this subject ought not to pass without inquiry, if our bishops and clergy would guard the rites of the church against profanation, and if they would not sanction the pernicious and soul-destroying figment, that any mere external ordinance can make a man a Christian?’

And in the same newspaper we read, that ‘On Monday the remains of the young Indian, Nee-mee-nam-quam, were interred in the burying-ground of Waterloo Church. The poor Indian died from the effects of intoxication, and he was baptized by a popish priest. His funeral obsequies were performed in the Waterloo-road Church, and we find, as might have been expected, a strange mixture of Paganism and Christianity—a mixture such as might have been expected among the Jesuits of China or Paraguay, but one which we did not expect to have seen so soon introduced into the diocese of London.’

We next come to John iii. 5; “Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” All the Witnesses who spoke upon this passage took a different view of it, and, in my opinion, none of them enter into its true meaning.

The FIRST says that he who has never had any other baptism than that of water, cannot, in his present state, enter into the kingdom of God. He who receives not the baptism of the Holy Ghost, has neither right nor title to the kingdom of God, nor can he, with any propriety, *be termed a Christian*.

The THIRD makes no scruple of considering these words as indicating the sacrament of baptism, because he believes

it to be the doctrine of the Bible; and he is sure that it is the doctrine of the Church of England; agreeably to which, he conceives it to be the opinion of the generality of the national clergy, that by that sacrament we are *made Christians*, and are born anew of water and of the Spirit.

The FIFTH says that to be born of water is to be baptized. To be born of the Spirit is to be regenerated. The indispensable condition of entering the visible kingdom is here made by our Saviour baptism. The indispensable qualification for admission into the invisible kingdom is regeneration.—Baptism, therefore, is here made by Christ a condition absolutely necessary to an authorized entrance into his visible church.

The SEVENTH says, “Nay, that without baptism we are taught that no man can enjoy the salvation of God.”

The EIGHTH, that “From our Saviour’s own words, Mark x. 14, and John iii. 5, put together, the right of infants to baptism may be also clearly inferred. For, in one they are declared actually to have a place in God’s kingdom or church; and yet into this kingdom or church, the other as expressly says, none can be admitted without being baptized.”

The NINTH, “If, then, our Lord declares that no one can” enter “into that church but by being ‘born of water and the Holy Spirit,’ which heavenly gift followed upon baptism, when received in true faith, he clearly makes baptism the mode of initiation into his church in this passage, as in Mark xvi. 15, 16, and in both he assigns to it the same office as circumcision in the church of the Old Testament.”

The expression, to be born of water, in this passage, is symbolical, “water” being substituted for the “word;” which is clearly shewn in Paul’s Epistle to the Ephesians, v. 26; “That he might sanctify and cleanse it (the Church) with the washing of water *by the word*.” Also by our Lord’s words, “Now ye are clean through the *word* which I have spoken to you.”* And by Peter, “As new-born babes (says he to the strangers) desire the sincere milk of the *word*, that

* John xv. 3.

ye may grow thereby.”* It is the written word of God, being made clear to our understanding by the influence of his Spirit, that brings us to a true knowledge of him. And by this word, and through this influence, we are born again. For, ‘it is by his word alone that the saving knowledge of the Father and the Son is conveyed; and by the Spirit, operating with the word, the eyes of the understanding are opened, the affections are drawn, and the word finds access to the mind.’ ‘Thus he unites the light and the power, for the one never operates without the other.’ When we are thus renewed in the Spirit of Him that created us, we come forward, and esteem it our greatest privilege to make a confession of our faith in his name (agreeably to his express command) in the ordinance of his own appointment, and therein declare that we go down with him into the grave, and rise again with him to newness of life; as it is expressed in Rom. vi. 4.

There is no allusion whatever to baptism in this passage; even if there were, it gives no support to the statement of the Third Witness; for what he advances is directly at variance not only with that particular text, but with the whole tenor of the Will. And though, according to him, it is the doctrine of the Church of England, and the opinion of the generality of her clergy, that a child is born of water and of the Spirit by being christened, it does not follow that it is the doctrine of the Scripture. No wonder, then, that they who maintain such doctrines should be charged (as he himself asserts that they are) “with blindness and ignorance; with innovating on evangelical truth; with being opposers of the doctrines of the gospel, and patrons of an heathenish superstition.”

According to the SEVENTH and EIGHTH WITNESSES, All children must be for ever shut out of the kingdom, whose parents or friends neglect to have them sprinkled. Of the wickedness of such sentiments I have previously remarked, and shall therefore not detain you now by again noticing them.

* 1 Pet. ii. 2.

The NINTH, by assigning to baptism the same office as circumcision in the church of the Old Testament, shows himself completely ignorant of the design of both ordinances. For neither Jew nor Jewish proselyte was required to believe before he was circumcised. But the contrary is the case under the present dispensation. For no one can be scripturally baptized until he believes to the saving of his soul. Circumcision introduced the natural seed of Abraham into all the immunities of a typical church. Baptism introduces his spiritual seed into all the immunities of the church of which the former was only a figure.

The FIRST WITNESS plainly infers that christening a child makes no alteration in its state; for it is clear that it can have no other baptism than water. Consequently, he goes beyond the Eighth Witness; for he shuts out of the kingdom even christened children; and, what is still more strange, he says they cannot with any propriety be *termed Christians*, although he had previously asserted that “we are all BORN CHRISTIANS.”

These six Witnesses, from an erroneous view of the passage before us, give it as their opinion that to “be born of water” is to be christened. This substitution for baptism, being of men, and by them applied to subjects for whom baptism was never intended, is derogatory to the honour of God; and on this account it cannot be too much stigmatized. It is vain, Gentlemen, to expect scriptural evidence from men who christen infants, because the administration of that rite alone clearly implies that they neither know what the purport of baptism is, nor who are the proper subjects of it. But it appears to be the prevailing opinion of all the Witnesses that baptism is a positive requirement, and that it cannot be dispensed with.

I shall now call your attention to the first of the clauses which occasioned the present appeal to this Court. “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”* And likewise to the clause, Acts ii. 41, which gives us the

* Matt. xxviii. 19.

first information of the apostles executing the order of their Divine Leader. "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them three thousand souls." *

You will no doubt have observed, Gentlemen, that however much these Witnesses have varied, the one from the other, and each from himself, upon nearly all the points of this controversy, there is still one subject upon which they are all unanimous, and that is, in charging the Testator with inditing his Will in language so ambiguous, that we cannot arrive at any solid conclusion, or decisive determination, what he does, or does not, require of us, for they all vary more or less in their views of it; and this is a natural consequence, while they will not receive it in its direct, plain, and simple meaning, in the simplicity of little children; as our Lord says, "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein."† But all men who are sincere and unprejudiced will allow, that the commission is given in language so express, in words so plain and familiar, that none can mistake them, but such as willingly suffer themselves to be deceived by the suggestions of the evil one. And I think I cannot err in asserting, that when this cause is moved into a higher Court (and moved it finally and inevitably must be), however the plaintiffs may now stifle the stings of conscience, under pretence that they cannot determine what is required of them; they will find to their confusion, in the day of the heart-searching scrutiny, that such excuses will not avail.

According to the Will, the Testator and his disciples met with much more opposition from the Scribes, Pharisees, Priests, devout women, and chief rulers, than they did from the mass of the people. So now, the body of those who call themselves professors of the gospel, together with most of those who are called good and pious Christians, have a more deadly hatred to the Divine Institution than is to be found among the people at large. Nevertheless, they ought to know, that whoever has the Will (and can read it,) will be

* † Acts ii. 41.

† Mark x. 15.

judged by it; as it is said by the Testator, "The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him at the last day."*

The Tenth Witness taunts the defendants with not quoting Scripture texts, nor yet giving Matt. xxviii. 19. But here he errs; the defendants do abide by Matthew's relation of the commission, as well as by that of Mark, both being Scripture texts; but as the latter mentions the promise as well as the commission, his words are rather more explanatory, they are these—"Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Now I am persuaded, Gentlemen, that you would think it impossible, if you had not heard the evidence, that the ingenuity of these witnesses could so far distort the plain relation of either of the Evangelists as to make the world believe that the commission, in its "favourable and large sense,"† directs the christening of an infant, and promises that, if it shall die before it commits *actual* sin, it shall undoubtedly be saved. I here challenge them, one and all, to produce one text of Scripture where such a practice is commanded, or such a promise annexed thereto. But it verifies the words of Jeremiah; "The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so."‡ You are aware, Gentlemen, that during the Testator's life he foresaw that the purport of his will would be perverted; and that, in order to preserve its purity, he said to his disciples, and to all who should tread in their steps, "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the *uttermost* part of the earth."§ It is clear these witnesses have not received this power, because they do not understand, or more properly will not understand, his Will; consequently they cannot be true witnesses. We may take the evidence of one of themselves in support of this assertion. "ONLY those (says he) can be considered as *proper* (witnesses unto him, or) teachers of the

* John xii. 48.

† Eighth Witness.

‡ Jer. v. 31.

§ Acts i. 8.

ignorant, who are thoroughly instructed in whatsoever Christ has commanded.”* And that these witnesses are not so instructed is evident, from what follows.

The FIRST says that it is *natural* to suppose that adults were the first subjects of baptism, as they must *hear* and *receive* the Gospel before they could renounce their old prejudices. That the apostles received a commission to *teach* and proselyte all nations, and THEN baptize them.

The SECOND, that all adult and grown persons are to be FIRST taught and instructed, BEFORE they be baptized, as the apostles were by their ministry to press upon ALL their converts an *universal* observance of, and obedience to, all the commands of Christ; preaching must not *only* go before baptism, but follow after it; obedience must be practised by *all those* that enter into covenant with God.

The FOURTH, “that as the words (teach and teaching) might have stood in the same order if it had been a command to go and convert all the nations to Judaism, circumcising them in the name of the God of Israel, and teaching them to observe the law of Moses, no arguments hence can fairly be adduced respecting the subjects of baptism. For in this case it would have been understood, that the adult males must be circumcised on a profession of the Jewish religion, and their infant offspring at the time appointed: and in like manner, all adults admitted into the church from among the Jews and Gentiles, must be instructed into christianity before they were baptized, though their infant offspring might be baptized also: and the case is exactly the same still.”

The FIFTH, that Christ directs his apostles, and all his SUCCEEDING ministers, to *teach* all nations, &c. In obedience to this command, the apostles *accordingly* baptized *all those* who were made disciples.

The NINTH, that the obligation of baptism rests upon the example of our Lord, and upon the practice of the apostles themselves, who thus showed that *they did understand* that baptism *plainly* meant, baptizing those that *believed* the

* First Witness.

“good news;” and that it was thus *expressly* made the initiatory rite by which believers of all nations were to be introduced into the church; and that BELIEVERS—ARE BEYOND DISPUTE THE PROPER SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM.

Now, Gentlemen, mark their perversity. They go on and tell you, that as the commission does not expressly exclude infants it must include them: and thus, by adding a meaning to the clause which it neither expresses nor implies, they put the child upon an equality with the believing parent, while it is incapable of being taught, or *proselyted*, or instructed, or preached into an understanding thereof, or of practising obedience, or of believing the “good news.”—Thus they contradict themselves, and show *beyond dispute* that infants are *not* the proper subjects for baptism: and that they themselves are yet ignorant of the first principles of the doctrines of Christ.

The SIXTH and EIGHTH WITNESSES thought that if circumcision had been to continue, and the command had run in these terms, “Go ye therefore, teach, disciple, or proselyte all nations, circumcising them, &c.” we should have known that children were subjects of the prescribed rite; and that the word teach does not necessarily exclude infants, the previously existing practice would have ascertained this.

The TENTH acknowledges it to be above his capacity, yet is not satisfied until he has tried to weaken its force, by turning it into ridicule. But, ‘ridicule, sneers, and contempt are not arguments,’ and are never resorted to in a good cause. The cause which is based on truth has no need of such equivocal support.

Now, Gentlemen, I will suppose that a king appointed a number of learned men to go throughout his dominions, to teach his people, giving them authority to make Doctors of Divinity of all those whom they taught. And I will suppose that these men, being either ignorant of their commission or neglecting to enquire into its true import, made D.D.s of all the children of those parents on whom they had previously conferred the degree; imagining that the “commission admitted of so FAVOURABLE and LARGE a sense as to include

their infants." Would not these witnesses themselves condemn such an absurd act? I am sure they would. And yet it is neither more "contradictory nor incongruous" than their own conduct, in sprinkling or affusing the offspring of those whom THEY call believers; the two cases are exactly parallel.

Or suppose that the heads of the established church were to have (if they have not already) their eyes opened to see, that sprinkling is not baptism; and that christening a child is not in accordance with the commission; and that, seeing this, they were desirous of effecting a change in the administration of what they call baptism, but that, either through prejudice or the fear of startling the people by so extensive an innovation, they saw good to continue the rite, but to change the subject; and should therefore issue an order to the clergy, enjoining them to teach those under their care, sprinkling them, &c. Would not the clergy naturally conclude, from the simple fact of the promulgation of the order, that a change from the accustomed practice was contemplated? And would they not perceive, that as there were no new directions given respecting the rite, the proposed change could only regard the subject, and that they were thenceforth to discontinue the sprinkling of infants, and sprinkle those persons only who should be previously instructed by them?

It is said by the SECOND WITNESS, that "Some say that Christ did neither baptize infants, nor command them to be baptized. That that is not to be wondered at, if we consider that they had already entered into covenant with God by circumcision, and christian baptism was not instituted; John's baptism was the baptism of repentance, of which infants were incapable."

The Evangelist Mark asserts that "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord," was "the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ." John was commissioned by the word of God to baptize, and the Testator established the institution by being baptized of him; thus it was a christian ordinance. If children were not baptized, for the reason he states, upon the same principle

their fathers ought not to have been baptized; for the Will does not specify that either the Testator or John baptized any but those who had previously been circumcised. As far as respects repentance, there was no difference between John's baptism and that of the Testator's. If children could not then be baptized, because they were incapable of repentance, the same cause, still existing, forbids them to be baptized now.

Gentlemen, you may recollect that the FOURTH styled himself an *honest* witness. I appeal to you and ask, has his evidence justified this assumption? What difference could it have made in the nature of the commission if it had been said, "Go ye, circumcise," &c.? The command to teach would still retain its full force; and every individual incapable of instruction would thereby be excluded. This single word TEACH (even if we could bring forward no other proof) shows the difference between the rite of circumcision and the ordinance of baptism. For, as far as we can gather from the Scriptures, not only no instruction was required previously to circumcision, but *every* Jewish male, *every* male born in the house of a Jew, and bought by a Jew of any stranger, "MUST NEEDS BE CIRCUMCISED."*

The SIXTH is of opinion, that if the commission had been given in the same words, substituting circumcise for baptize, that "we should have known that children were to have been the subjects of the prescribed rite." But I am unable to discover what difference this substitution could possibly make; the discipline would still precede the circumcision; and the true heirs would still see nothing improper in the use of such language, though they would see the same "impropriety and incongruity" in circumcising any one before he has been disciplined.

The SEVENTH asserts that "there is ample room for supposing family baptism to be included in the comprehensive terms of our Saviour's final commission."

The commission includes every individual of every family upon the earth, who is capable of understanding and believ-

* Gen. xvii. 12, 13.

ing the gospel; who can be taught all things commanded by the Testator to be observed.

“If any part of the commission (says the EIGHTH WITNESS) can be said to exclude infants, it must be the word teach.” Exactly so, Gentlemen; and it does most certainly exclude them. It is absolute, and all the sophistry of all the plaintiffs combined, with all the laboured statements of these their Witnesses, cannot in the least degree weaken its force. It presents a barrier to their unhallowed footsteps which they shall never be able to pass. This Witness, as well as the Ninth, impugns the wisdom of the Testator, not because he did not clearly define the proper subjects for baptism, but because he did not name those that were not. Not considering that those who do not answer to the description must necessarily be excluded. “Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having on a wedding garment?”*

It is the general opinion of the Witnesses, that baptism took the place of circumcision; therefore, as the Jewish infants were commanded to be circumcised, so the children of the present day ought to be christened. This is an egregious error of our opponents (as I hope hereafter to prove), although it is constantly put forth by them as one of their main supports.

“While (says the SEVENTH WITNESS) the Holy Spirit glorifies the Saviour in the case of saved hearers, by accompanying the preaching of the gospel with a quickening, a converting influence, he equally glorifies him in the case of saved infants, by anticipating, not only in the order of nature, but in the order of time also, the *physical power of hearing the gospel*.” And a learned Bachelor of Divinity,† in a work recently published, says, that “there is SOME REASON for what Augustine asserts, that ‘Our mother the church lends to them the feet of others, that they may come; and the heart of others, that they may believe; the tongue of others, that they may confess; that seeing they are burdened by another’s sin, they may be saved by another’s confession.’” The same gentleman has also further published,

* Matt. xxii. 12.

† Francis Russel Hall, B. D.

that "if we baptize infants, and they are not to be baptized, our baptizing them, if it can do them no good, can do them no hurt. But if they ought to be baptized, and we do not baptize them, we do them inconceivable hurt. We keep them from a mean of grace; we keep them from Christ; we hinder them from receiving the Spirit; we hold them in the bond of iniquity; we let them remain in the power of the wicked one; we shut them out of the church of God, and thrust them from the ordinary way of becoming the sons and daughters of the Almighty." Such and similar nonsense, adduced by some of the ablest and most strenuous defenders of christening, is surely proof sufficient that the rite is of man, and not of God. To make this gentleman's reasoning good for any thing, he must show upon what authority the saying of Augustine rests, as his individual authority is worth nothing; all the premises are defective, in that they stand in need of proof. Nor can it be made intelligible, by any power of language, how one person can by any possibility perform the offices here specified for another, seeing that they are all of a spiritual nature. No man "can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him."*

We now come to Acts ii. 41. The FIRST WITNESS merely remarked that three thousand were converted on that day. The SECOND could *not guess* how such a quantity of water could be procured for their decent dipping; but he supposed that if they even went to the water, it would require a week rather than a day to despatch it. The FOURTH says "it is at least highly probable that they were not baptized by immersion." The FIFTH *concluded* those persons were not immersed, because, within the utmost part of that day, there was *not time under any circumstances to perform it*. The SEVENTH received no conviction that Peter sent away one individual drenched and dripping, the scarcity of water making it *incredible*. *As all the pools in Jerusalem united would have been quite inadequate to immerse them*. The EIGHTH said that there was not the least presumption that they were

* Ps. xlix. 7.

immersed. The NINTH, that it is highly improbable that they were all baptized by immersion. Here, Gentlemen, you have the evidence of seven of the witnesses (the three others being silent on this clause), who are anxious to make it appear that the apostles executed their commission in the first instance on record by sprinkling their converts; but all that they bring in support of this opinion are merely negatives. The EIGHTH tells you there is no PRESUMPTION; the NINTH, that it is HIGHLY IMPROBABLE that they were *immersed*. The FOURTH, that it is HIGHLY PROBABLE they were not. The SEVENTH, that all the pools in Jerusalem would not suffice for that purpose. The SECOND SUPPOSES, and the FIFTH CONCLUDES, that there was not time in one day to IMMERSE them. Then comes the question, Were they baptized, or were they not? It is evident that these witnesses are either ignorant of the matter, or else they do not tell the whole truth. Every unprejudiced man must confess, that in a city like Jerusalem, which was *then* so plentifully supplied with water, there must have been a sufficiency, not only to baptize three thousand, but to baptize all the inhabitants thereof. And that the plea set up by the plaintiffs, that there was not a sufficiency, is too puerile to deserve notice. Indeed I cannot refrain from saying that it is absolutely contemptible. To make their statements worthy of being received in evidence, they must show that, in a city where there was a sufficient supply of water for all the domestic and religious purposes of a million and a half of people, enough could not be found to baptize three thousand. I appeal to you, Gentlemen, as candid and impartial men, who are sworn to give a verdict according to the strength and veracity of the evidence adduced, if it be not incumbent upon the plaintiffs to establish beyond a doubt that the three thousand could not have been baptized in Jerusalem merely on account of the scarcity of water. But as it appears the witnesses are unanimous in their opinions that it was by some application of water,—but in what manner they have not the courage to say, although we know that, by raising the above difficulties in the way of immersion, they

intend to make us believe that it was by sprinkling that the three thousand were in one day added to the church,—I shall here, in reply to the second and fifth witnesses, show that the administration of the ordinance of baptism, as instituted by the word of God, requires much less time than the administration of the rite as instituted by man. The pattern of baptism is clearly shown to us, once for all, in the case of the Eunuch, who was baptized almost as quickly as Philip spoke the words, “If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.” And if the apostles had been aided by the hundred and twenty disciples which were then at Jerusalem (and it is certain they had all the aid that was necessary), they would with all solemnity, and in due order, with ease to themselves, have baptized the three thousand after the same manner in a few hours.

We have now, Gentlemen, removed all the difficulty attending this particular circumstance, — we would hope, even from the minds of our opponents; for as men possessing rational faculties they cannot but perceive that the difficulties originate entirely with themselves, and that they arise from a partial and prejudiced view of the case. We did not feel ourselves under any obligation to do this; it was sufficient for us that the Will declares that the three thousand were *baptized*: and we know that it would not be baptism unless every individual of them was put under water. Unaccountable as it may appear, we assert, that even if it were stated that the circumstance here recorded had transpired in the sandy deserts of Arabia, we should still maintain that they were all baptized; (for as the Lord appointed the ordinance, he would also provide the means for its accomplishment, according to the strict letter of his Will, by causing waters to spring up in the desert;) rather than believe that his disciples should, under the most pressing necessity, make a mockery of his ordinance in the way stated by our adversaries.

In the Book of Common Prayer, we find three different forms for conducting the administration of (what is there called) baptism; but that called the “Administration for

such as are of Riper Years" is here the most suitable to our purpose, as all the witnesses admit by their silence that the three thousand were adults; and besides, it is the form practised by the second witness himself. Some of the plaintiffs have no written directions that I am acquainted with; they, I suppose, perform the rite according to their own fancy; but I presume that when they do administer it in their best fashion, it does not take up less time. I shall therefore describe the episcopal mode of christening an adult.

"When the sponsors shall be ready to present the converts at the font, the priest shall ask whether any of the persons here presented be baptized or no: if they shall answer, No; then shall the priest address them—Then shall the priest say, Let us pray, and here *all* the congregation shall kneel. Then [after two prayers] the people shall stand up, and the priest shall say, Hear the words of the Gospel written by St. John, in the third chapter, beginning at the first verse. After which he shall say this [long] exhortation following, Beloved, &c. After that there is a short prayer. Then the priest shall speak to the persons to be baptized on this wise. Well beloved, &c. ye must also faithfully for your part promise, in the presence of these your witnesses, &c. Then shall the priest demand of each of the persons to be baptized, severally, these questions following. Dost thou renounce the devil and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of this world, with all covetous desires of the same, and the carnal desires of the flesh, &c.? Dost thou believe, &c.? Wilt thou be baptized in this faith? Wilt thou then obediently keep, &c.? Then shall the priest SAY two prayers, the one containing four requests, the other beseeching that the water may be *sanctified* to the mystical washing away of sin. Then shall the priest take each person to be baptized by the right hand, and placing him conveniently by the font, according to his discretion, shall ask the sponsors *the* name, and then shall *dip* him in the water, or *pour* water upon him, saying, I baptize thee, &c. Then shall the priest say, We receive this person into the

congregation, &c.; and here the priest *shall make a cross upon the person's forehead*, in token that he shall not be ashamed, &c. Then shall the priest say, Seeing that *these persons* are *regenerate*, &c. Then shall be *said* the Lord's prayer, all kneeling. Then another prayer. Then all standing up, the priest shall use this exhortation following, speaking to the sponsors first. Forasmuch as *these persons* have promised in your presence to renounce the devil and all his works;—ye must remember that it is your part and duty to put them in mind what a solemn vow, promise, and profession they have now made before this congregation, and especially before you their chosen witnesses, &c. And then, speaking to the new baptized persons, he shall proceed and say, And as for you who have now by baptism put on," &c.

Now, Gentlemen, consider the great length of this service, with all the interruptions likely to arise from the confusion occasioned by the assembling of *nine* thousand sponsors; and then say, if the rite that the second witness is in the habit of administering would not have taken, with the assistance of the hundred and twenty disciples, "a week rather than a day to despatch it"? But this is not all; there might have been a great difficulty in procuring sponsors, and one day would scarcely be sufficient to collect such a number, as many of the Jews would probably have refused to stand; as I am told is now the case with many Protestants, who are so far enlightened as to be afraid of taking the responsibility which promising and vowing for another necessarily entails upon them, and that many even have qualms of conscience respecting the christening of their own children.

Gentlemen, contrast this with the simple administration as appointed by the Testator, and it will clearly appear on which side the difficulties preponderate.

Some of the witnesses imagine that Judea has never been a well watered country, because *modern* travellers find it a thirsty land. Are they ignorant of the prophecy of Moses, who said, that "*the stranger that should come from a far land shall say—that the whole land thereof is brimstone,*

and salt, and burning, that it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth thereon;”* and that the reason of the earth being so cursed was, “because they (the inhabitants) have forsaken the COVENANT of the Lord God of their fathers”? *Let the plaintiffs and their witnesses ponder this, and profit thereby!*

Having now shown to you, Gentlemen, that these Witnesses do not, or affect not to understand the nature of the command contained in the first clause, on which the plaintiffs ground their claim, I shall proceed to show you that they are equally ignorant of the nature of the promise contained in the second. In this clause, Gentlemen, are summed up all the other spiritual promises which the Will contains, and which is of the first consequence to man, as pointing out to him the only “way of salvation” revealed therein.

Four of the Witnesses say that “He that credits the gospel as a revelation from God, and is baptized, shall be saved—redeemed from sin, and enjoy eternal glory; but he that believeth not shall be damned, because he rejects the ONLY provision that could be effectual to his salvation:”† that “He that receiveth and embraceth the gospel, and is baptized, shall obtain eternal life:”‡ that “On the belief of the gospel, Christ has made the salvation of the whole human race *absolutely* to depend; and every one who reads the gospel *must know*, that to be baptized in the name of Christ is to make a *public* and solemn profession of faith in Him as the redeemer of mankind:”§ that “Baptism is a rite which *demand*s or *require*s something of us, *i. e.* faith in Christ; which faith is the reliance of a penitent upon the atonement of our Saviour. We know, from the instance of Philip and the Eunuch, that there is an explicit requirement, and as explicit a confession; he that believeth, and is baptized, becomes a member of the church.”|| Now, Gentlemen, you would not think it possible that the same four men who gave this evidence, would turn round, and in the same

* Deut. xxix. 22, 23. † First Witness. ‡ Second Witness. § Fifth Witness.
|| Ninth Witness.

breath tell you, that what they had before said, "that the baptized were obliged to profess their faith, and that therefore only such as could make this profession should be baptized—that there is no weight at all in it, because what is spoken of such refers only to those who at that period of life heard the gospel, and were not born of parents who had been Christians." That, "although adults are to be first taught and instructed before they be baptized, it follows not from hence that the children of such parents may not be baptized before they are taught." "That it is true that infants are baptized in consequence of a profession of faith, but it is the profession of their parents, not their own." That "We gladly admit that all children, dying before actual sin committed, are admitted into heaven; hence it follows that infants are proper subjects of baptism." Here, Gentlemen, they plainly contradict their former statements, or the preceding assertions are destitute of meaning: they are, however, expressed in very positive terms; both opinions cannot be correct; one must be absolutely false; and we leave it to you to determine as the Will dictates, and to give your verdict accordingly.

It is remarked by the SECOND WITNESS, that "It is not said, he that is not baptized shall be damned, because it is not the want, but the contempt, of baptism that damns, otherwise infants might be damned for their parents' neglect." And the FOURTH spoke much after the same manner. We may infer from these remarks, that christening is not required, and that it is a useless rite; for the law that does not condemn children for their parents' neglect, cannot save them through their parents' attention. The obvious reason why it is not so said is this, If the word had been repeated in the condemnatory clause, it would be doubtful whether faith was required at all, or only baptism.

The words of the promise, Gentlemen, are as perspicuous as words can possibly be. "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved." The incontrovertible import of which is, that a person must believe before he can be scripturally baptized. If it had been written, 'he that believeth not, and is not baptized,' the meaning would have been equivo-

cal, for until he does believe, he ought necessarily to remain unbaptized, being under condemnation, and by consequence unable to make the required confession. And these witnesses would gladly have taken advantage of the repetition, and have said, that if even faith were required, every one ought to be baptized, whether they had faith or not, as that would be complying with a part of the requisition. This would have been a better pretext for christening infants than any which the witnesses have brought forward; because they might very well say, Children are capable, in the simple sense of the word, of being baptized, though they are not capable of believing. And it would appear far more specious than receiving their profession by proxy, or of anticipating their physical power of hearing, or of even admitting that if they die without sin they shall be saved, and therefore are fit subjects for baptism.

The NINTH WITNESS asserts, that because children are innocent they are fit subjects of baptism. But you know very well, Gentlemen, that the Will asserts exactly the contrary. It states that baptism is the appointed ordinance by which those who repent and believe the gospel are to confess their faith, and witness to the world that they have received the pardon of their sins. It is an ordinance applicable only to such. And although we cannot say that it distinguishes believers from unbelievers in the eyes of mankind,—for many, we are sorry to say, walk so as to throw a discredit upon their profession, and in works deny the Son of God,—yet we can say, notwithstanding, that none can positively be reckoned among the redeemed of the Lord, even here, but such as have confessed him in the ordinance of baptism.

The SEVENTH WITNESS wishes to enlighten us by saying, that we are apt to be led into a mistake respecting the case of *saved* infants, from misunderstanding the expression, “He that believeth shall be saved.” (“Here he wilfully *takes* away from the words of the book.”) This relates to those who are of age to hear the gospel; but there are many who could never be saved, were this the only way of salvation. Mark now his inconsistency! He still makes it the only

way, when he says, "the Holy Spirit glorifies the Saviour in the CASE OF SAVED infants, by anticipating the *physical power of hearing the gospel*;" and consequently of believing it by implication. I confess, Gentlemen, that I cannot conceive how the physical power of hearing the gospel can be anticipated. How an individual can hear before he is possessed of the power of hearing. The Lord has not been pleased to reveal what his designs are in regard to infants, therefore these witnesses are determined to make up the deficiency; and all their confused mode of reasoning arises from assuming doctrines not found in the Scriptures. They bring infants into the world as sinful creatures, children of wrath, deserving of eternal punishment; and as there is no way of salvation from guilt but by faith in Christ, and as it is repugnant to their natural feelings and to common sense (setting aside the word of God) that creatures should be punished for sins which they did not commit, they devise such plans as their hearing, and of course believing, by anticipation, as the means of procuring them a place in the heavenly kingdom.

Paul might have been describing these witnesses, in his first epistle to Timothy, when he says, "If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth;"* for they consent neither to the words, nor to the doctrine, of the Testator; they reject his ordinance, and set up a rite of their own, by which they pretend to give to the infants of christened parents a privilege above that of others; and thus they make such parents believe, that if their children die in infancy they "shall undoubtedly be saved." We do not read that there will be any distinction made in the case of infants in the world to come. "God hath made of one blood all nations of men;"† and those who die in infancy we

* Tim. vi. 3, 5.

† Acts xvii. 26.

have reason to believe will be all alike happy. For being all under the curse (*i. e.* subject to physical evil and to temporal death) brought upon all mankind by the sin of Adam, they shall be all alike redeemed therefrom by the death and resurrection of Christ;—"for as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive," no matter what their parents may have been, whether believers, nominal Christians, Jews, Mahometans, pagans, or savages;—all in his sight are upon a level. But these witnesses make a distinction; and although they dare not assert, in a straightforward and manly manner, that heathen children, *i. e.* those who go hence unchristened, are condemned—they imply it, by telling you, that "the church of God never scrupled to admit a child when only one parent was a christian."* That "the christian church now admits the children of christian parents."† That "the infant children of believers are the proper subjects of baptism."‡ That "infant baptism is in the Scriptures *confined* to the children of professing Christians."§ "That baptism ought to be confined to the children of believers only."|| "That there is a warrant to baptize a believer's family, however young." "That the infants of believers have a right to christian baptism."¶ That "St. Paul calls the children of believers *holy*."** Here they assume that some children are born heirs to a spiritual kingdom, as some others are to an earthly one; with this marked difference, that in the latter case, if the child live, and the estate be not alienated in the mean time, he is certain to possess it; while in the former, if he does not die soon after he is christened, the probability is that he will lose it. For these witnesses, notwithstanding their cunning device, guarantee the child's spiritual inheritance only during his childhood, as he is, according to them, lost as soon as he becomes an actual sinner.

But how is it, Gentlemen, that the world puts confidence in men who one minute say that children of believing parents are entitled to the promise, and the next as positively con-

* First Witness.

† Second Witness.

‡ Fourth Witness.

§ Fifth Witness.

|| Seventh Witness.

¶ Eighth Witness.

** Ninth Witness.

tradict it, by asserting, "That having Abraham and Sarah for their parents would not entitle them to the blessing."

"That none become children of God by natural propagation; that grace runs not in the blood."† "That the new birth is not derived from natural descent, nor from HUMAN CONTRIVANCE."‡ "That mere natural relation to Godly parents cannot save them."§ "That in no case can they become sons of God from carnal descent."? ||

But wherever there is inconsistency, Gentlemen, there will be found prevarication. And thus the witnesses have subverted that part of their evidence in which they appeared to be the most unanimous, and on which the plaintiffs chiefly establish their system. But, in fact, there is little unanimity among them, any further than they are all fully determined to disobey the commands of the Testator. One of themselves said, that his *brethren* acted upon no fixed principle. And how can they, when their system is founded on error? It may fitly be compared to the house the foolish man built upon the sand, and, like it, it will ere long be destroyed. For the rain is descending, the floods are swelling to undermine it, and the wind is blowing with increasing fury that shall beat it down. These are symbolical of the going forth of the gospel in the power of the Spirit, which will discover the fallacy of the system by which these men have deceived themselves and their followers. This they might now discover, if they did not willingly shut their eyes. Indeed one of their most strenuous advocates (the Sixth Witness) has exposed the bubble, and shown you that the officious zeal of the plaintiffs' witnesses is already bringing on and hastening its dissolution. And in order that every one, in and out of this court, may make his observations a way-mark to warn them of the folly and danger of adopting such a perilous system, I shall here repeat his words; "We (says he) consider baptism as an ordinance for BELIEVERS AND THEIR CHILDREN. I am aware, indeed, that I do not express the sentiments of all Pædobaptists, when I say, that the admini-

* First Witness.

† Second Witness.

‡ Fifth Witness.

§ Sixth Witness.

|| Seventh Witness.

stration of it to children ought to be confined to those of believers ONLY, for I am well aware of the different sentiments entertained, and the different course pursued, by many (I might I FEAR SAY BY MOST) of my Pædobaptist brethren in the south of Great Britain. I cannot but think them VERY FAR in the WRONG: and I have never been able to FIND ANY THING LIKE FIXED AND PRECISE GROUND amongst them on this subject. Some place the warrant for baptizing in a willingness to be instructed: some, in a general profession of Christianity, and of faith in the Bible: others, in the attendance of the party applying for it at church, and bringing his family with him, so as to put them in the way of good: while others still, I believe, go so far as to concur with the Established Church of England, and administer it to all who apply, considering it as the PRIVILEGE OF THE CHILD, WITHOUT REGARD TO THE PROFESSION AND CHARACTER OF THE PARENT AT ALL. Now in all this (says he) there is an UNDEFINED and UNSETTLED laxity, which appears to me highly pernicious in its practical consequences; and which, moreover, TENDS to weaken, and even, if followed fairly out, to OVERTHROW, the whole of the argument for INFANT baptism that is founded on the covenant relation, so distinctly recognized in Scripture, between parent and child."

This is the witness, Gentlemen, who told you that mere natural relation to godly parents cannot save children. Is not this denying the covenant relation between parent and child? And does not this overthrow the whole of the argument for infant baptism which is founded upon that covenant? And does not this witness *follow fairly out* that which his southern brethren leave short, when he acknowledges it to be evident "that pouring a little water on an infant's face can in itself do it no good"? Certainly he does. For although it is clear that the mere use of water can do no unbeliever any good, yet without baptism there is no way for believers being scripturally introduced into the Church of Christ. In this sense we deem it indispensable. But to the plaintiffs it is worse than useless; for what they call baptism is an act of rebellion, inasmuch as it supersedes the

ordinance of the Testator. The way in which they apply water, and the objects to whom they apply it, are unknown by the commission ; consequently, so long as they continue in this their rebellion, they exclude themselves from any participation in the promised blessings.

The Tenth Witness winds up the evidence by telling you, that "every thing he has seen advanced, as Scripture proof that dipping is the *only* mode of baptism, is as *pitiful a cause as ever Scripture was brought to prove*. This, however (says he), would not be worth noticing, if the pitiful proof were not made to support a doctrine which unchurches almost the whole world. With our opponents, if there be no dipping, there is no baptism ; if there be no baptism, there is no visible church membership. This sweeping doctrine then declares the visible church of Christ is confined to those who are dipt. All else, though as eminent as a Hervey, a Henry, or an Owen, or any body else, are not so much as visible church members, and if they went to heaven, it was not through the means of the visible church."

These declamations, Gentlemen, are of little weight in this important trial. What if Hervey, Henry, Owen, and this Witness, be of one opinion, does it prove any more than that they have all disobeyed the commandment ? And what if all the unbaptized be shut out of the visible church, does that in the least detract from the importance of the ordinance ? No. They remain without *of their own free choice*. The whole world, except his own family, rejected the preaching and warning of Noah ; and every one knows the dreadful consequences that followed. And what if (as this Witness says) our testimony concerning baptism unchurches almost the whole world, is this any argument against it ? Is it not rather in unison with the words of the Revelator ; "*all the world wondered after the beast*" ?* Baptism, Gentlemen, is a peremptory requirement. It is in Scripture so perfectly united to believing, that they can never be separated but by Him who saw good to join them together ; and this He will not do while the world exists. It is therefore futile to advance

* Rev. xiii. 3.

human authority as proof in such a case, or any men, however celebrated, as examples. "Call no man — father upon the earth!" This cause admits of no precedents, save those which are drawn from the Will; and we do not read therein of any being made members of the visible church previously to their being baptized in water. Those who reject the counsel of God, do it at their own peril. The Will excludes no one; on the contrary, it exhorts "every one to repent and be baptized." Paul tells us, that "God was in Christ reconciling the WORLD unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them"—"we are (says he) ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."* We, therefore, after the example of the apostle, pray these men to lay aside the arms of their rebellion, and "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and" they "perish from the way."†

I have to apologize, Gentlemen, for detaining you so long upon this clause, seeing that the plaintiffs have no interest therein. For it is an incontrovertible fact, that those who do not baptize according to the commission have "neither part nor lot in" the promise. And that they do not so baptize, is manifest. For whosoever christens either child or adult, sets the commission at nought; and thereby shows that he will be saved by a way of his own, and not according to the way appointed by the Testator.

Now, Gentlemen, I call your serious attention to the evidence given on that passage which points out to us, in the plainest possible manner, the proper subjects of baptism, and the accurate order in which the ordinance ought to be administered. In this passage, all the circumstances attending the administration thereof are stated in so exact and in so regular a manner as to furnish a perfect example for us to follow; an example to which all believers are required to conform, before they can enjoy the promised blessing; an example so complete in all its parts, that no one can mistake it, but such as wilfully close their eyes, and reject the counsel of God. You are doubtless aware that I allude to Acts viii.

* 2 Cor. v. 19, 20.

† Psalm ii. 12.

38, 39, to obscure the perspicuity of which, the Witnesses have recourse to a species of reasoning derogatory to the honour of the Holy Spirit, and dishonouring to themselves as men professing to be faithful. I must except the Second Witness from this charge. He allows the passage to retain its true import. He says, "After the Eunuch was instructed, he desired baptism; his qualification was, believing with all the heart: only that faith gives a RIGHT TO BAPTISM, and ENTITLES to salvation. He believed with his whole heart that Jesus Christ was the Son of God. The manner of administration—HE WENT DOWN INTO THE WATER, AND WAS BAPTIZED BY PHILIP."

The FIRST WITNESS asserts that "the Eunuch PROBABLY plunged himself, as this was the plan which APPEARS to have been generally followed among the Jews; but the person who received his confession of faith was he to whom the baptism was attributed."

This is wresting the Scriptures; the fact denies the assumption. For where was the necessity of Philip accompanying the Eunuch into the water, when he had already received his confession in the chariot. However, we have the admission of this Witness of the body being put under water. But why should he suppose that the evangelist took no part in the transaction? It cannot help his cause. For if it even were the practice of the early Christians to plunge themselves, that practice must exclude infants, unless there had been an exception in their favour to the general rule, and they were privileged by having some one to plunge them.

The FIFTH says, "To the translation no reasonable objection can be made;" but still he objects to our construction of the passage; and then gives us a most absurd view of the transaction. You will observe, Gentlemen, that they are not our words which he turns to ridicule, but the words of the Holy Spirit: hear how he proceeds; "they went down both into the water; that is, they were both plunged." Do the words here used convey any such meaning? Is going into the water to the knees, the loins, or the breast, plunging

in the water? Will any one who is acquainted with the meaning of the word say so, except for some sinister motive? If he even insist that going into the water step by step, until a convenient depth is attained, be plunging, it is not the same act which is next recorded. He proceeds, "And he baptized him; that is, Philip plunged the Eunuch." This unquestionably is the plain, simple, and grammatical meaning of the phrase. But you will observe that the admission is made by way of sarcasm. And being in company with the former, and the subsequent absurd conclusion, the whole transaction is hereby represented as a triad of absurdity. He continues; "And when they were come up out of the water, &c., that is, when they had both been plunged the second time, and risen up from their immersion, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip. In other words, both were plunged twice, and the Eunuch a third time." Now, I appeal to the Court, and ask if any but the most inveterate jester would treat the Word of God in the profane manner that this Witness has treated it. Is walking into the water, baptizing in the water? or coming up out of the water after the act of baptism, plunging? Is going down into, coming up out of, and baptizing in the water, the same act, signifying precisely the same thing? None but such as are determined to persevere in an obstinate course of error, can possibly view the account which this Witness gives of this plain, simple narrative, and the pun which he makes upon the words "into," and "out of," any otherwise than a wilful misrepresentation.

The SIXTH, that "Philip and the Eunuch descended together into the water; that Philip baptized him, but in what way not a *hint* is given." Gentlemen, can you believe this Witness is sincere when he makes this statement, "not a hint is given"? it is true, not a hint to favour his views, and therefore he declares no decision can be drawn therefrom; and yet he tells you, he "intended to show, from the plain statements of the New Testament itself, that baptism was performed by sprinkling or pouring."

"Let it be supposed (said the SEVENTH) that the baptizer

led the person to be baptized, not only to the water, but into it, the question returns, what did he do with him there? I answer (says he) that all the language of Scripture which relates to the act of baptizing informs me, that he took a handful of water, and poured it upon his turned-up face. This is the act of baptizing."

No believer in Christ can resist the evidence contained in this verse, when viewed in connexion with other parts of Scripture relating to baptism. And every candid mind that searches the Will with a sincere desire to his own salvation, must acknowledge that it is amply sufficient, without any comment, to exhibit the nature and import of the administration of baptism. Yet see the perversity of these men! How obstinately they shut their eyes against the light of the Divine Word, which shines here with the utmost refulgence! The Sixth asserts, that there is not a hint given how the water was applied; and the Seventh as positively asserts that it was by pouring upon. Was it needful for both individuals to alight from the chariot, and to go down both into the water, merely to have a *handful* poured on the uplifted face of the Eunuch?

If the Holy Spirit had intended to show that the water was to be poured upon us, he would have stated it in plain language: he would not have particularized the unnecessary circumstances of descending from the chariot, going down into, and coming up out of, the water; the natural tendency of which, if the case were so, is to lead us to a widely different practice from that which the text inculcates as it now stands; and these Witnesses would have been the first to scoff at the idea of individuals going down to, and into, the water, for the purpose of obtaining a few drops to sprinkle their faces, or a handful to affuse them. The Eunuch exclaimed with joy, "See, here is water (*i. e.* a body of water sufficient for the purpose of baptism), what doth hinder me to be baptized?" The nature of the ordinance having been explained to him, he knew that a handful of it would not suffice.

The NINTH differs both from the FIRST and FIFTH. He says that "This passage is relied upon by the defendants as a

decisive proof of the immersion and emersion of the Eunuch. If so (says he), it proves too much; for nothing is said of the Eunuch which is not said of Philip; and so Philip must have immersed himself (once) as well as the Eunuch." And accordingly he says, "this passage is nothing to the purpose of the IMMERSIONISTS." Gentlemen, is not this a palpable falsehood? Is it not said that *he* baptized *him*? Will he assert that the pronouns *he* and *him* relate to both individuals, as both baptizing and being both baptized?

The EIGHTH says, that "The circumstance of Philip and the Eunuch going down into the water, and coming up *from* it, does not with *any certainty* prove that he there dipt him; for as waters run in the valleys, they *might* go down from the chariot to, or into the *rivulet*, (*for geographers find but little streams there*) and Philip baptized by pouring water on him."

These two witnesses also differ; neither of them will allow that the Eunuch was baptized, and neither of them DARE assert, in plain, unequivocal terms, that he was sprinkled.

"But supposing (says the TENTH) that Philip and the Eunuch went both of them literally *into* the water, and came literally up out of the water, what does this prove? That they were to the ankles, or to the knees *perhaps*, and that is all. Now there the Eunuch might be sprinkled as easily as at the side, for there would not be so far to stoop for the water; and as the people then wore sandals for shoes, and a sort of *petticoat* for small-clothes, the Eunuch, although he had been in the water, would neither have been obliged to strip, nor to submit to any inconveniency, on the supposition that he was sprinkled."

Mark, Gentlemen, the words "SUBMIT TO INCONVENIENCY!" See what Paul submitted to for the defence of the truth.* Yet this witness would not have the Eunuch to be put to the trouble of even changing his clothes in order to be inducted into the Church of Christ, through which church only lies the appointed way to eternal glory.

The FOURTH says that "men will form their conjectures

* 2 Cor. xi. 23—28.

concerning the mode in which Philip baptized him, according to their different sentiments on that subject."

This is the Witness, Gentlemen, who trusts his efforts to explain the Holy Scriptures "have been conducted from proper motives, and in dependence on the Lord; the Witness who confidently appeals to his heart-searching Judge that, "as far as he knows, he has not kept back the sense of any passage." What were his motives for leaving this part of his evidence so inconclusive is not for me to determine. But I shall trespass upon your time while I ask him a few questions.

Is not the account which the sacred historian gives of this transaction sufficiently explicit to convince us that Philip administered the ordinance by putting the Eunuch under water?

Wit. I cannot say that it is, because I am not quite satisfied upon that subject.

Coun. Say rather that you are not satisfied that he sprinkled him? Is it at all probable that both Philip and the Eunuch should go down into the water for that purpose? Be candid! Have you not before declared that immersion is doubtless baptism? And if it be doubtless baptism, why entertain a doubt of it in this instance, where all the circumstances are so clear as to put the matter beyond all dispute?

Wit. I think it more convenient to suffer every person to form his own opinion thereon.

The case of the Eunuch furnishes an example how far men will wander from the right path, after they have once made up their minds not to walk in it. They turn away from the plain, simple course, and consequently every step they take removes them to a greater distance from the "mark," and they "go astray like lost sheep." Well might the prophet Isaiah exclaim, "Behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people."*

The word baptize is univocal, otherwise it would not have been used by the Testator to specify his ordinance. None of the Witnesses deny that Philip and the Eunuch

* Is. lx. 2.

“went down both into the water,” but they profess very different views of the purpose for which they went down. Seven of them are opposed to the second, who has not suffered his prejudices to warp his understanding, but takes the correct view of the subject: and whatever these seven may say against the administration of the ordinance as commanded by the Testator will not, I am sure, prejudice you against the cause of truth; for we are exhorted by Paul to “Let no man deceive us with vain words.”* If, when these Witnesses are called to the bar of God to answer for their conduct in this particular; if they can say with a clear conscience that they have not been able, with all the light and information given to them in his word, to arrive at any other conclusion than that the word baptize, in every place where it occurs in the New Testament, as applied to the initiatory ordinance of the Christian institution, means no more than to sprinkle the face with a few drops of water, and principally the face of a new born infant, the Lord will not exact more from them than is right. They shall, though in error, be beaten with few stripes. For he “who knew not his Lord’s will, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes.” But with regard to the proper subjects for baptism, they are wholly without excuse, as they cannot here plead even ignorance, for there is no instance recorded in the Will of any individual being baptized who was not either a genuine or a professed believer in the Testator. Here then they know their Lord’s will, but still “commit things worthy of stripes;” and he tells us, and them also, what must inevitably follow.

This passage is of the first consequence, as it hands down to us a perfect pattern of the administration of baptism as commanded by the Testator. A pattern that we can no more depart from, and be held guiltless, than could Moses have departed from the pattern shown him in the mount, and which the Lord impressed upon his mind when he said, “And look that thou make them after their pattern.”† It is impossible that we can either worship God in an acceptable

* Eph. v. 6.

† Exod. xxv. 40.

manner, or believe in the promise of the Testator, unless we clearly understand what baptism is, who are the subjects, and what the purport of it. This being the case, Gentlemen, the plaintiffs can have no claim until they are better instructed, until they have "their understanding opened" to behold the ordinance in its true light, and are made meet for its administration.

We now come to the cases of Cornelius, of the jailer, Crispus, Stephanas, and Lydia, of the baptism of whose households you have heard so much. And as it is from the account the Will gives of them, that the principal arguments for the christening of infants under the new covenant dispensation is founded, I shall comment on the evidence of each Witness as given upon each transaction, and begin with Cornelius.

The FIRST says, that "the baptism of the Spirit did not supersede the baptism of water, nor indeed can it."

Nothing can be clearer than this. The instance before us is the only one recorded in the Will of any individual receiving the baptism of the Spirit previously to baptism in water. And the conduct of the apostle, as here mentioned, evidences the indispensability of the ordinance, and is a convincing proof that the command of the Testator respecting baptism peremptory, is in every case that can possibly occur. Peter knew that until they were baptized with water, he could neither ACKNOWLEDGE THEM AS BRETHREN, NOR EAT BREAD WITH THEM AS DISCIPLES. This Witness also says, that "to 'be baptized in the name of the Lord,' implied the taking upon them the public profession of Christianity; and believing on Christ Jesus as their Saviour and sovereign." In this instance, infants are irrefragably excluded; they could neither believe in Christ, nor make the required profession, consequently they could not be partakers of the Holy Spirit.

The THIRD says, that "the apostle, considering that this gift of the Holy Ghost was *only* to enable them to speak with tongues, *not* to regenerate them, inferred from thence that they ought the rather to be baptized—to be born of water and of the Spirit."

This Witness appears to be wiser than the Spirit of God, who dictated the Will. For the Will informs us, that when Peter rehearsed the case to the disciples at Jerusalem, "they held their peace from further contention, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life."* Such a visible and particular interposition of the Most High, antecedent to baptism, was never witnessed, either previously or subsequently; doubtless it was for the purpose of overcoming the prejudice of the Jewish people against the Gentile nations.

The FOURTH, "These words† contain a plain and convincing demonstration of the falsehood of the Quakers' doctrine, that water baptism is unnecessary to them who have received the inward baptism of the Spirit; since the apostle here not only declares, that water baptism ought therefore to be administered to these persons, because they had already been baptized with the Holy Ghost; but also commands them to be baptized on that account. Cornelius must himself be saved—by the words which Peter would speak to him, and by faith in those words; and thus also salvation would come to his family."

It is difficult to determine whether this Witness intends to state, that salvation came at that time to the family of Cornelius; or that it should come at some future period, when the younger branches should have understandings capable of receiving it. I think the latter is the most probable. He appears angry with the Quakers because they do not see the great importance of the ordinance of baptism; an ordinance which he himself, in another part of his evidence, appears to treat lightly. Hear what he says on this subject. "Neither yet did he (Christ) simply bind the grace of God to baptism, as if it was *absolutely* and without any exception necessary; seeing, in another place, he ascribes regeneration to the Spirit without any mention of water. *Whatever ignorance* (says he) of the precept, or *mistake* about the nature of it, renders not men incapable of baptism by the Holy Ghost, can never render them

* Acts xi. 18.

† Acts x. 47.

incapable of the salvation promised to the baptized. If, however, baptism, and being 'born again,' be terms of the same meaning, or if one invariably accompanies the other, so that all who are rightly baptized are regenerate, and none else; then all who die unbaptized all over the earth, and in every age of the world without exception, are shut out of heaven! A proposition far more dreadful than any held by the most unfeeling and presumptuous supra-lapsarian Calvinist."

This Witness professes to have a sovereign regard for the word of God and the ordinances of his appointment. What is the design of the observation just quoted? Is it not to throw discredit upon His commandments? To make it manifest that they may be disregarded with impunity? Does it not show that whoever insists upon their unqualified observance is denounced by this Witness as dreadfully unfeeling and presumptuous? It is impossible that any man can be brought to a saving knowledge of the Scriptures, and at the same time remain ignorant of the obligation he is under of confessing his faith in this divine ordinance. But the Lord will be justified when he speaks, and be clear when he judges.*

The FIFTH opposes the THIRD, by saying that "It is evident that adults were baptized by the apostles after they were either really or apparently regenerated;" but remarks, "that a profession is not a necessary qualification for baptism in all cases, because Cornelius and his house made none;" yet he acknowledges that, even in this case, "they indeed gave evidence," which is tantamount to a profession; and then adds, "that at the present time it is indispensable in all cases where adults are concerned. It is however true (says he) that infants are baptized in consequence of a profession of faith; but it is the profession of their parents, not their own."

We are not sure that Cornelius and his household made no profession at their baptism, and we will not believe it upon the credit of this Witness. They were baptized "in the name of the Lord," and doubtless made that confession of their faith in his name (of which they had then a miraculous evidence) which all others had made who had been pre-

* Ps. li. 4.

viously baptized. We find confession of sin and profession of faith in the Messiah, mentioned in connexion with baptism, in numerous instances; and though this is not invariably the case, it cannot be inferred from thence that they are not necessary. The several instances on record, where a verbal profession of faith accompanied the administration of the ordinance, and this being in conformity with the commission, is authority sufficient for us to demand it in every instance, and we therefore DEEM NO BAPTISM VALID, WHERE THIS IS OMITTED. As to infants making confession by proxy, the wonder in my mind is, that a rational being should advance such an absurdity.

The SEVENTH states, that "as certainly as the Acts of the Apostles is of the same authority with the four Gospels, so certainly the argument from Scripture, in favour of infant baptism, is direct and obvious; and for this reason, that baptism was administered to believers and their houses, as in the case of Cornelius and others."

Before we can admit that this argument is direct and obvious, we must have direct and positive proof that there were infants in this household; and not only that there were infants therein, but that they were also baptized. For, as certainly as the Acts of the Apostles is of the same authority as the four Gospels, so certainly is the argument from the Scriptures manifestly opposed to infant sprinkling, as in the case before us. The Will asserts, that "Cornelius feared God, with ALL his house." Infants could not, by any possibility, be here included. So that the Scriptures, in this (and every other) instance, so far from giving the shadow of countenance to the practice of the plaintiffs, are diametrically opposed to it; and the following observation of this Witness, that "We have ample room for supposing family baptism to be included in the Saviour's commission," is equally opposed to "THE TRUTH." What is here predicated of the household of Cornelius, is incompatible with the supposition that it contained infants. The Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word (that is, upon those who heard it with understanding), and they spake with tongues and magnified

God. After being baptized, they prayed Peter to tarry certain days. How a man can, by any ingenuity of reasoning, by any inference drawn from this record, show the slightest shadow of authority for the baptism of infants, is to me incomprehensible; and I am sure it must be equally so to the Court.

The NINTH says "That the IMPUGNERS of infant baptism are pleased to argue much from the absence of all EXPRESS MENTION of the baptism of infants."

This is the fact, Gentlemen; we do argue from the total absence of any mention whatever of infant sprinkling, either direct or implied. And can any argument be more conclusive, on a subject that concerns the worship of the true God; who, in every age of the world, has given ample instruction for the time being in what manner he would be worshipped? Commanding his people neither "to add unto the word," nor "diminish aught from it." But the defendants, Gentlemen, take higher ground even than this. They assert that the tenor of the commission absolutely excludes children; and this, as already shown, is corroborated by the narrative before us.

The defendants are assured, first, that if the term household be considered as including every individual which composed the house, in all the families under consideration, infants formed no part of them; for otherwise the whole house could not have been baptized: and secondly, that neither Cornelius, Lydia, the jailer, Crispus, nor Stephanas would have presented them for that purpose. Neither would any of the apostles have baptized them. This is not a bare assertion; for they would not so act without a divine command; and no such command has yet been produced. This Witness thinks it absurd to assume, that even if it could be proved that there were on children in any of the said houses, it would be in favour of the defendants; he thinks this but an auxiliary argument, of very inferior importance, as he tells you he has proved that baptism took the place of circumcision, and consequently that the baptism of infants was so much a matter of course as to call for no remark in Scripture history. If this

is an auxiliary argument of such very *inferior importance*, why does he take so much trouble to overthrow it? Is it from a feeling of compassion towards his weaker brethren, who possibly may not view it as an argument of such little importance—an argument so easily disposed of, that he affects to condemn it; notwithstanding he gives sufficient reason to conclude that he believes the plaintiff's cause depends mainly upon these very circumstances: but as he proceeds he finds the difficulties increase upon him; he therefore makes a virtue of necessity, turns round, and tells you he has established his cause independently of the baptism of houses. But where is the proof of it, Gentlemen? Is it not yet wanting? Then he tells you, that "it is much more probable that the phrases 'fearing God with all his house,' and 'believing with all his house,' included young children under [the term] believing adults—than that so many houses or families should be constituted only of adults." You see, Gentlemen, a case of such infinite importance as the taking upon ourselves the profession of the name of Christ, rests here upon a probability that households, the members of which are said to believe in God, and to fear God, included infants. The probability is, that they did not; for it is no uncommon circumstance for families to be without young children, or even without children at all; and if there were any in these families, the CERTAINTY is, that they were neither baptized, nor included in the phrases before mentioned.

Gentlemen, you will now be pleased to turn to the 16th chapter of Acts, where you will find the account of the Philippian jailer, who "came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house; and they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to ALL THAT WERE IN THE HOUSE. And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes, and was baptized, *he* and ALL HIS, straightway—and rejoiced, BELIEVING IN GOD WITH ALL HIS HOUSE." It is here expressed as clearly as words are capable of expressing any thing, that the jailer

and ALL his family believed and were baptized. Hear the testimony of the Witnesses.

The FIRST admits that "the jailer and ALL that were in his house were taught the doctrine of the Lord, and were baptized in consequence of their faith." Consequently they were all capable of receiving instruction. But lest you should think he goes too far by making this admission, he insinuates, that there might be children in the house which were not included in the word all; because he can SCARCELY SUPPOSE, that the whole families of Lydia and the jailer had no children in them. He asserts that all the circumstances disprove that there was any immersion in the case, and that the apostles had another method of administering baptism. Because, IF they administered it according to the Jewish formalities, it must have required considerable time, and not a little publicity. And that if the jailer had had children, it is not LIKELY that they would be omitted. But as all this rests upon an *if*, it is just as LIKELY to be on the other side; consequently his argument is not worth a rush. He informs you that the Jews were accustomed to receive whole families of heathens, young and old, as proselytes, by baptism; so here (says he) the apostles receive whole families, those of Lydia and the jailer, by the same rite; which rite, he previously informed you, was by plunging: so that even here, were we disposed to attach any importance to what he states, he shows that the jailer and all his house believed and were *baptized*.

We may reasonably conclude, from the doubtful manner in which he expresses himself, that his words are not in unison with his convictions, but that his mind is evidently under the influence of a powerful bias. How dare he say that the apostles "had another method of administering baptism," when Paul, who was concerned in this transaction, positively asserts that there is but "one baptism"? Consequently, one baptism can only be administered one way. He says, that "it is by NO MEANS LIKELY, that there was any immersion in the case; that the necessity of despatch, and the words of the text disprove it."

The words of the text, Gentlemen, so far from disproving, positively assert that they were baptized; and it is foolishness to say that the necessity of despatch disproves it. There was none of the necessity which he insinuates. The doors of the prison were opened by God, and none could shut them until the purpose for which they were so opened had been in due order accomplished. He is anxious to induce a belief that they were not baptized; but he has not the boldness to assert that they were sprinkled.

The SECOND "does not deny the lawfulness of baptizing by immersion," yet he asserts that it is VERY IMPROBABLE that the jailer and his house were baptized by dipping, and that it is not in the LEAST PROBABLE that Paul himself was so baptized, because it was NO WAYS PROBABLE that Ananias should carry him to the river to plunge him. And he further asserts that there is no doubt that the jailer promised to use his utmost endeavour to bring his family to the knowledge and obedience of Jesus Christ, and that on this account Paul baptized his whole house. See here, Gentlemen, we are again environed with probabilities on every side, and then assailed with gratuitous assertions, not one of which has any foundation in the Will. Can you, Gentlemen, allow the plain, direct, and manifest commands of God to be set aside in this manner, and made a dead letter? No. Your verdict will show this to be impossible. By his own statement, this Witness believes that Paul was satisfied with the jailer's sole security for bringing up his family in the nurture of the Lord; yet he requires for the same purpose three sureties for every individual. Is there not in this a great degree of inconsistency. "Dipping then, surely, (says he) cannot be so essential unto baptism, as for want of it to pronounce the baptism of all the reformed churches throughout the world to be null and void, as some amongst us do."

The baptism (as it is called) of the reformed churches, Gentlemen, is not baptism; this is the very thing that we are contending against. Baptism, in the scriptural sense of the term, considered as the christian initiatory ordinance, is

putting a believer under water. This ONLY is baptism; and we contend that this baptism is required of every believer upon his taking upon himself the profession of christianity, and that whatever is substituted in its stead is a mockery of the Divine Name. And here I openly, fearlessly, and advisedly assert, without dread of contradiction, that (according to the commission of the Testator and the promise thereunto affixed) baptism is so indispensably necessary, that no individual, so long as he lives in the neglect of it, can establish his claim to "an inheritance among all them that are sanctified."* But it is useless, Gentlemen, to take up more of your time with this part of the Witness' evidence, which furnishes you only with PROBABILITIES and IMPROBABILITIES, in addition to the IFS and PRESUMPTIONS of the Witness who preceded him.

The FOURTH says that "Paul and Silas exhorted the jailor to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and assured him that in so doing he would certainly be saved. They also included his household in this assurance; not that his faith could save them, but his example might lead them to believe in Christ also, and have the benefit of the means of grace for their salvation. They then instructed him and ALL his family more fully in the doctrine of the gospel, and the Lord so blessed the word that he was immediately humbled and softened; and then, professing faith in Christ, he was baptized in his name, and at the same time all his household was baptized likewise,—and his trembling was turned into joy. 'He rejoiced with all his house, having believed in God.' The language (says he) concerning the baptism of believers and their households, so much accords with that concerning the circumcision of Abraham and his household, in connexion with other Scriptures, and with the general and early use of infant baptism in the primitive church, that it must be allowed strongly to countenance the sentiments and practice of Pædobaptists. It seems also most probable, to me at least, that Paul and Silas — did not baptize him and his family by immersion."

* Acts xx. 32.

Careless and inattentive hearers may imagine that this is a fair representation of the Scripture account of the transaction now under consideration. But you, Gentlemen, who listen with attention, will discover its disingenuousness. He says, that the baptism of the jailer's household **STRONGLY** countenances the practice of pædobaptists. But how does he make this appear? By transpositions and interpolations of the text. Is this unintentional? Is this statement conducted from a pure motive, with a sincere desire to establish truth? Can he appeal to "his heart searching Judge, that he has spoken word for word what he believes he would have him speak?" Observe, Gentlemen, how he transposes the text; the "Jailer rejoiced (says he) with all his house, having believed in God." Thus insinuating that the whole family rejoiced, but that only the jailer believed. As is generally the case with those who wish to conceal the truth, he betrays himself by inadvertent declarations, for he tells you that Paul and Silas "instructed the jailer and **ALL** his family more fully in the doctrines of the gospel;" consequently we must conclude that they were of a proper age to receive instruction; and it follows, that being so instructed, and having the same evidence of the immediate interposition of the Almighty power in the behalf of the apostles as the jailer himself had, they were converted to the faith, and made a confession thereof in the ordinance of baptism.

The **FIFTH** attempted to prove, in the case of Cornelius, that a profession was not, in all cases, a necessary qualification for baptism; and here he denies that faith is a prerequisite, because it is said of John, that "he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb." But this is nothing to the purpose; what is said of John is said of him as the great precursor of the Testator, and not as an ordinary child; but even this is not to be taken literally from the day of his birth, but from the time that he was capable of understanding. As it is said of him, "the child **GREW** and **WAXED** strong in spirit, and was in the desert *till the day* of his showing unto Israel."* This Witness is of opinion

* Luke i. 80.

that what was true of John, can be true OF ANY OTHER INFANT. This being the case, why does he not act accordingly, and receive all that are brought to him, and not confine christening to the infants of professing Christians?

It would have been singularly strange that Paul and Silas (who had been loosed from the stocks in a miraculous manner, and called by God to administer the ordinance of baptism,) should be ignorant of the character of the persons whom they were called to baptize. They "spake as the Spirit gave them utterance;" they knew their commission, and obeyed its precepts. Will this Witness assert that they spake to children, that they baptized children, and that children believed? No, he was aware this would be contested, and therefore he very prudently and modestly gives up the point, and takes another view of the question, saying, "there is *strong* reason to believe that in *some* or *other* of these families, and not IMPROBABLY in all, there were children too young to be baptized on their OWN profession."

The SEVENTH, "does not believe that the jailer was immersed, because, although he is said to have 'brought them out,' it was evidently only out of the inner prison." But, Gentlemen, it is further said, that "he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway." Now comes the question, whither did he take them? No doubt where there was water to wash the apostle's stripes, and where there was a sufficiency to baptize them. We are not required to prove how, or where, the water was obtained. It is sufficient for our cause that the Will declares that they were baptized: (we have before stated what we mean by baptism) therefore water must have been somewhere found for that purpose. For ourselves, we see no difficulty in the case; it is our opponents who create the phantasm. We leave it to the Divine Founder himself. He provides the means to accomplish his own designs.

The NINTH observes, that it is "AT LEAST VERY FAR FROM BEING CERTAIN" that there were no infant children in the house, because he assumes the jailer to have been a man in the vigour of life. Assumptions again, Gentlemen! But

admit his assumption to have been well founded, what does it prove? There are thousands of men in the vigour of life who have no children. In effect, it is evident that he is convinced the words "he believed and all his house," excludes infants, and thus he, like the Fifth, is driven off his ground, and, like him, has recourse to the same evasion, viz., that even if it can be proved that the jailer had no infant children, his is not the only believing family mentioned in the Will from which infants must be excluded. Observe now, his prevarication; "It is not (he states) said that they only to whom the word of the Lord was spoken, were baptized;" and further, that "The account of the baptism is given in a *separate verse*, and in a *different place*—where there is no limitation of the persons who were baptized to the adults *only*, by any terms which designate them as persons 'hearing' or 'believing.'"

Here again, Gentlemen, difficulties increase upon him. First, he attempts to make it evident that there were young children in the jailer's family, because, forsooth, he was in the vigour of manhood; finding that this would not serve his purpose, he has recourse to other of the believing families, where there must then have been children, which were said to be all baptized; but as several statements are made of these families which are inapplicable to infants, we must have them removed out of the way until the apostle has left off speaking, and afterwards have them brought to him to be baptized; for he says that it was those only to whom the word was spoken that were baptized; of course the children must have been taken out of hearing during the time that apostle was speaking. Is not this serious trifling with the Divine Records?

In Acts xviii. 8, it is written, "And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord, with all his house; and many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed, and were baptized."

The Third, Fifth, Sixth, Eighth, and Tenth Witnesses do not notice this circumstance, nor the clause wherein the baptism of the individuals here introduced is mentioned (indeed several of them do not notice the others); the Seventh freely acknow-

ledges that he does not know that there is such a clause in the Will ; and all that the Ninth has to say upon it is coupled with the case of Cornelius : therefore, from the silence of five of them, and nothing being said by the First but of Crispus only, we infer that they all (except the Seventh) either find it too critical a point to touch upon, or else that they agree with the Second and Fourth, the latter of which asserts that "Crispus and all his family had embraced the gospel;" and the former, that "Crispus and his household WERE BROUGHT TO BELIEVE, AND WERE BAPTIZED."

We have next Paul writing to the Corinthians thus, "And I baptized also the household of Stephanas." Upon this clause,

The FIRST WITNESS states that they were "probably converted and baptized by the apostle himself."

The SECOND asserts that "St. Paul makes honourable mention of Stephanas and his house; they were the first-fruits of Achaia, *i. e.* the *first there converted to christianity.*" And

The FOURTH, that "the several persons belonging to his family were qualified for usefulness, and ought to have possessed great influence in that church, as they were the oldest converts in all Achaia; and as they had habitually devoted themselves to every service, by which they could minister to the good of their brethren."

Here, Gentlemen, you have two of the plaintiffs' witnesses testifying that the family of Stephanas were all converted to christianity; and one, that they were probably all converted and baptized by the apostle himself. The conclusion then certainly is, that there were no young children in this household.

The SEVENTH merely asks, "is this a proof that they had among them no infants, because they addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints? You will think it is so, Gentlemen, unless he proves that infants were capable of ministering to them. All the others passed the clause unnoticed, except

The NINTH, who, as usual, puts forth all his strength, and

“darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge,”* in order to prove that Stephanas had children of all ages. “How forcible are right words; but what doth your arguing reprove?”† What can be plainer than the words of the apostle, “I beseech you, brethren (ye know the house of Stephanas ‘which I baptized,’ that it is the first-fruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints), that ye submit yourselves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with us and laboureth.”‡ From these words, is it not evident that there were no children in the household of Stephanas? or that what is said of it, both with regard to baptism and the other circumstances therein stated, has no reference to them; and is it not manifest that if it did contain children, they had attained to sufficient age to confess their Lord and to be baptized? And it is certain that whether the house of Stephanas consisted of children, relatives, or domestics, they were the ‘first-fruits,’ and consequently the oldest Christians, in Achaia. They were helpers and labourers with Paul in the gospel vineyard, and as such the Corinthians were exhorted to submit themselves to their advice, as experienced Christians, in all matters pertaining to the worship of God. What can be more preposterous than the attempt of this Witness to prove from these words that Sylvanus had a wife, and sons, and daughters?

Paul’s epistle is addressed to the church at Corinth, which he would not require to be subject to young Christians, the oldest of whom, by the Witness’ own account, could not be more than eighteen; because in the same chapter that Paul beseeches the Corinthians to submit themselves to the house of Stephanas, he exhorts them not to despise Timothy (on account of his youth), whom by way of pre-eminence, he styles “my own son in the faith.”§ According to this Witness, “to understand the passage rightly, it is necessary to observe that Stephanas, the head of the family, had been sent by the church of Corinth to St. Paul at Ephesus. In the absence of the head of the family, the apostle commends ‘the house’ (the family of Stephanas) to the *regard*

* Job xxxviii. 2.

† Job vi. 25.

‡ 1 Cor. xvi. 15, 16.

§ 1 Tim. i. 2.

of the Corinthian believers." But the true reading of the passage, Gentlemen, is exactly the contrary of this. Paul exhorts the Corinthians to *submit themselves* to the family, not to take the *charge of it*. Another stumbling block of this Witness is, that as "servants have no power to show hospitality," therefore "they of course are excluded." How can this be, Gentlemen? Was not Joseph Potiphar's slave? And was not "all that Potiphar had put into Joseph's hand?" And was not Joseph at liberty to show hospitality to any he pleased? Surely then Christian servants, who are the "Lord's free men," might, as occasion required, be directed and entrusted by a believing master to administer to the necessities of the poor saints.

What would be thought of a witness in a civil cause, who should come into a court of justice to give evidence upon oath as to the number, age, and sex of a man's legitimate children, giving also the dates when they were respectively baptized, though, on being cross examined, he could not so much as show that the man was ever married, or that he ever had had a child. Would he not, to say the least of him, be expelled from the court. But in this all important case, the learned Judge, and you, Gentlemen of the Jury, think it serves the cause "of truth" to listen patiently to such unwarrantable statements, in order to give the Witnesses an opportunity of exposing the weakness of their cause, and thus effectually guard the world against their vanities.

We now come to the case of Lydia, which I purposely kept back for the last, as it is upon the baptism of her household that the plaintiffs chiefly fortify themselves; this they think an impregnable tower, because there is nothing said of their hearing or believing; for which reason, more of the Witnesses spake upon it than upon any of the four other cases. Mounted upon this rock, even the SIXTH claps his wings, and begins to shout victory: but still there is no proof of there being unbelievers in her family, any more than there is of there being unbelievers in that of the others. In fact, the subjects of baptism are so clearly defined in the

commission, that there was no necessity to particularise them in any instance : yet to guard the unwary against the cavils of unbelievers, the qualifications of the individuals, or that which constituted them fit subjects for baptism, are again pointed out, in four of five cases which are now under consideration. And why, I will ask, was it thought of so much importance by the sacred historian to mention particularly the opening of Lydia's heart, previously to her being baptized, if those whose hearts were still unopened might be partakers of the same privileges that she thereby enjoyed? These Witnesses, by their statements, imply that believers have a delegated power to grant to, or withhold from, their children and dependants the enjoyment of the promised possession. But every believer in Christ knows, as well as he knows his right hand from his left; that those only are the subjects of baptism whose heart the Lord opens.

In Acts xvi. 13—15, it is said, “ And on the Sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down and spake unto the WOMEN which resorted thither. And a certain woman, named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us; whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us saying, If ye have judged me faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.”

I shall here just remark, that the Witnesses generally argue that the term house, or household, must of necessity include little children: but this, as every body in the court must know, is not the case. Families without children are so common, as scarcely to call for a remark. Of twenty-five that I am in the habit of associating with, only nine of them have any children under ten years of age. Of the remaining sixteen, some have none whatever, and the others none but such as have arrived at years of understanding. This is a fact, Gentlemen, and a fact which sets at nought all the reasonings and conclusions of the plaintiffs drawn

from the mention of households being baptized, even if we had not another argument in support of our cause. For until they can adduce unquestionable evidence that the households in question contained children in an infantile state, and that the infants were also baptized, we pay no regard to their arguments, nor to any statements which are not based upon a more solid foundation.

The FIRST WITNESS comes, in very few words, to a correct conclusion upon this clause. He says, that "Lydia attended to these things; that she believed them, as the doctrines of God; that in THIS FAITH SHE WAS JOINED BY HER WHOLE FAMILY; AND THAT IN IT THEY WERE ALL BAPTIZED."

The SECOND says truly, that "the opening of the heart to receive Jesus Christ is the peculiar effect of the sovereign power and omnipotent grace of God; and that Lydia's faith in Christ gave her a right to baptism." If, then, the faith that gave her a right to baptism could only be communicated by omnipotent power, how is it possible that she could communicate it to her children? The idea is absurd. Yet this Witness tells you, that "all her family, upon her *undertaking* to bring them up in the knowledge of Christ, were admitted to the ordinance with her." We should feel obliged if our opponents would produce this undertaking of Lydia's, as with all our searching, and we have taken some trouble, we have not been able to discover it. We do not believe that either Lydia, or any other believer, ever gave such an undertaking. Believers are admonished to bring their children up "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord:"* but to give them the knowledge of Christ is the prerogative of God, and nothing less than that knowledge can make them fit subjects for baptism. The baptism of Lydia's household is the leading precedent or excuse for the open, bare-faced manner of making people believe that their children are made heirs of God by sponsors or parents undertaking to believe for them. "Woe to the rebellious children, saith the Lord, that take counsel, but not of me; and that cover with a covering, but not of my Spirit, that

* Eph. vi. 4.

they may add sin to sin.”* As their fathers did, so do they. See, Gentlemen, the fatal effects of prejudice. This Witness, because he was taught in his early days that a child can believe by proxy, still believes it; and instead of studying the Scriptures with the simplicity of a little child, he, as well as the other Witnesses, his brethren, study them to see how far they can be made to tally with their preconceived opinions.

The **FOURTH**, that “Lydia was led to embrace the gospel, and was baptized with her household; the adult part of which, no doubt, were instructed in Christianity along with her;” and that “there is no proof that there were any children in her family.”

Is not this, Gentlemen, tantamount to a direct assertion that her household, like Lydia herself, had their hearts opened previously to their being baptized?

The **SIXTH** and **SEVENTH** say that the baptism of families is mentioned in a way that indicates it to have been no extraordinary occurrence, but a thing of course, and remarkably so, as in the case of Lydia; that from the account given of this and other cases, it is evident that the administration of baptism to families was nothing new. They were not singular cases, nor rare cases, nor cases to be accounted for and justified by any peculiarity of circumstance, such as had not happened before, and might not soon happen again; and that unless the defendants can show that these cases were in the circumstances of them extraordinary, and therefore not fair specimens of what was customary, **OUR GROUND IS FIRM.**

Now, Gentlemen, I shall endeavour to convince you that their ground is not firm, although you may think it unnecessary, as it has been clearly shown, by one or other of the Witnesses themselves, that the **FIVE HOUSEHOLDS BELIEVED**; consequently, the baptisms of these families would not be mentioned as matters of course, but as extraordinary occurrences, even in the instance of that of Lydia.

The book of the Acts of the Apostles is a very brief history

* Isaiah xxx. 1.

of what took place in the going forth of the gospel, during the period of time which it embraces. In selecting the events that are noticed therein, the Holy Spirit directed the writer of them to those which are the most illustrative of the power of God in giving success to his Word. It is plain, if we read the whole of Acts xvi., that the conversion of both the households was as much an extraordinary occurrence, as that of the conversion of Lydia, or of the jailer; both were the effect of an extraordinary interposition of the Most High God. And the mission of the apostles into Macedonia, whither they were called from Troas across the *Ægean Sea*, was altogether special and extraordinary. Now, Gentlemen, if we take the whole into our view, cause and effect, is it not clear that the Almighty intended us to regard these as extraordinary exercises of his power, producing an extraordinary effect? It would now be thought, by *those who know the truth*, a very uncommon occurrence for a whole household to believe, and become the followers of Christ; wherever such a circumstance occurred, it would be mentioned as something very unusual; and such is each of these cases, mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, as I shall proceed to show you.

An angel of God appeared to Cornelius, saying, "Send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon—he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do." Peter fell into a trance, and it was shown him, by a vision *from heaven*, that all national distinctions should cease—that the Gentiles were to enjoy the same privileges as the Jews; and he was exhorted not to call those common whom God had cleansed. Peter returned with the men whom Cornelius had sent; and the Holy Ghost, to give him a still further assurance that the heathens were to be brought into the same fold as the Jews, fell upon them while Peter was yet speaking, and they ALL spake with tongues, and magnified God. And is this one of the cases that had in it nothing extraordinary? This, the only one upon record in which the Holy Ghost is said to be given to any before they were baptized? This, the most extraordinary case that is related in the

Acts of the Apostles? This, that never happened before? And, the purport for which the angel spake to Cornelius, for which the vision was shown unto Peter, and for which ALL the household spake with tongues, being accomplished, This, that shall never happen again?

Only Peter saw the vision of the great sheet, wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. But "when he was come up to Jerusalem, he rehearsed the matter to them of the circumcision from the beginning;" and then said, "And, behold, immediately there were three men already come unto the house where I was, sent from Cæsarea unto me. And the Spirit bade me go with them, nothing doubting. Moreover, these six brethren accompanied me, and we entered into the man's house. And he showed *us* how he had seen an angel in his house, which stood and said unto him, Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon—who shall tell thee words whereby *thou* and ALL THY HOUSE shall be saved. And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost. Forasmuch then as God gave THEM the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God? When they heard these things, they held their peace."* Therefore, by Peter's own testimony of the vision which he had, and his account of the down-pouring of the Spirit, which was witnessed by the six men that went with him, the apostles and brethren that were in Judea, were convinced that "Christ Jesus had broken down the middle wall of partition between" Jew and Gentile.†

In the case of the jailer, we have another extraordinary manifestation of Divine interposition to confirm the apostle's mission. The foundations of the prison were shaken by an earthquake; and by the power of God were all the doors opened, and every one's bands loosed; yet not a prisoner escaped: and still, according to the account of these wit-

* Acts 10th and 11th ch.

† Eph. ii. 14.

nesses, this was not a singular case, nor a rare case—only a *matter of course*. It is evident that the miracle was not performed for the sole purpose of liberating Paul and Silas, nor for the salvation of the jailer only, but also for the salvation of his household; and for a further confirmation that Paul and Silas were the ministers of the true God, and that the messages they brought were dictated by the Most High. We have no account of such a circumstance having happened before; and we may be *certain* the like will never occur again.

There are no particulars given of the conversion of Stephanas and his household; it is only said that they were the first-fruits of Achaia, who became ALL teachers and labourers with Paul. This also is a singular circumstance.

“And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord, with ALL his house.” This is a *singular* and very *rare case*. At one time, during our Lord’s ministry, the Pharisees inquired, by way of triumph, “Have any of the rulers believed on him?” This was to choke the incipient faith of the officers that were sent to take him. It may be supposed that not one instance of the kind could be produced, and as those people, who knew not the law, were denounced as accursed, these officers would in consequence feel alarmed lest they should fall under this malediction. Some of the Pharisees, notwithstanding, did believe, yet they did not confess Him; but here we have an instance of a *Chief Ruler* not only believing, but also confessing him in the ordinance of his house.

From the striking manner in which the case of Lydia is expressed, there was in it something *very particular*. We may be certain that Paul had sufficient testimony to convince him not only that the Lord had opened her heart to attend to the words which he spake, but that the members of her house also were under the same influence.

I have thus shown that the calling of the households of Cornelius, Lydia, the jailer, Crispus, and Stephanas, together with themselves, were in their circumstances *extraordinary cases* of divine interposition, and not merely, as stated by the Witnesses, matters of course (a mode of speaking of the divine

procedure, if not profane, at least very indecorous); and that consequently the plaintiffs' GROUND IS NOT FIRM. I therefore would advise them to move from it as quickly as possible, lest, when too late, they should find it like that upon which stood Korah, Dathan, and Abiram!

The SEVENTH WITNESS is *certain* that Lydia was the only believer, because she said, If ye have judged *me* to be faithful, come into *my* house. The *certainly* thereof plainly indicates that our opponents are sorely pressed, it being made to depend upon a simple and familiar mode of expression every day used, and which cannot without violence be construed to signify any thing of an exclusive meaning. Here, Gentlemen, you have an instance of the miserable shifts to which the plaintiffs are reduced, when they resort to such a prop in order to support their tottering cause. This Witness is certain that Lydia was the only believer in her house, and yet her household were baptized. Dare he assert that she was the only one in the family arrived at years of discretion? If not, unbelieving adults must have been baptized; and, repentance and faith, previously to baptism, whereon our opponents, with all their laxity in such cases, insist, must in this instance have been dispensed with by the apostles.

"Having thus (proceeds the SIXTH) the unquestionable fact of the baptism of families, a fact according with the ancient practice of the circumcision of families, and supported by the use of a word that *properly* denotes a man's children or offspring, we are warranted to assume that such was the usual practice."

We do not deny that the word, in the place here mentioned, might include the children of the individual; and we will go further, and say that it might include also servants and inmates. But we do deny that young children are included in four of the cases, and ground our denial on the following reasons. ALL the house of Cornelius were saved by the word that Peter spake unto them. Paul and Silas spake to the jailer, and "to ALL that were in his house: he set meat before them, believing in God with all his house." Crispus believed in the Lord with ALL his house.

I (says Paul) baptized the household of Stephanas, and THEY have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints.

Neither is the baptism of houses a fact according with the ancient practice of the circumcision of families. Under the old dispensation, only males could thus be received into covenant: under the new, both males and females are baptized, but neither one nor the other until their hearts are opened. "Although (says he) there is abundant evidence of a change in the rite, there is none whatever of any such change in its administration as excludes children from being any longer the legitimate subjects of its administration." But why does he christen females? Are we any where told in the Will that by any outward rite they were made members of the Jewish community? If, as he endeavours to show, "the covenant made with Abraham was the gospel covenant under which we live, and which is the basis of the New Testament church; and the ordinance of circumcision was attached to that covenant as the sign of its blessing and the seal of its promise;" why, if there be only a change in the rite, does he vary the subjects of its administration? By not christening all the children born of his flock, he neglects the most essential part of the command, the only part on which an anathema was pronounced, which is, "the uncircumcised man-child shall be cut off from his people." According to his own evidence, he leaves them exposed to this dreadful curse; aye, and he leaves in jeopardy some of his christened ones too, for I presume he does not christen them all according to the law of circumcision, *i. e.* on the eighth day, which was of the first importance. Add to which, he christens a female child, for which the Lord gives him no authority; and he leaves the servants unchristened, which the law commanded to be circumcised. In fact, he neither takes the law nor the gospel for his guide.

If, as a matter of course, all the family were made meet for baptism through the faith of its head, was there any necessity to repeat, upon four different occasions, that the household also believed? No. It was mentioned in order

to warn the unlearned, that they might not be seduced by the sophistry of men, and through their teaching be made to believe that the word *house* denoted young children. The angel said to Cornelius, Simon shall tell thee words whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved. This makes it as clear as the sun at noonday that these families were baptized in accordance with the Testator's instruction, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved;" for which reason, these Witnesses say very little upon the promise, nay, some of them pass it unnoticed; and this Witness is one of them. And why do they not notice it? The reason is plain; it presents an obstacle which their sophistry cannot surmount.

The EIGHTH says that "the instance of Lydia STRONGLY FAVOURS our practice, whose faith alone is mentioned." This, Gentlemen, is catching at a straw; for he may rest assured that if it had been discovered that any of her household had been baptized in unbelief, it would afterwards have been said of them, that they had "neither part nor lot in this matter;" as in the case of Simon the sorcerer, who was at the time of his baptism (even though it is declared that he believed, and of course had made a profession to that effect,) "in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity."*

The NINTH, after an arduous but fruitless attempt to prove that there were unbelievers in some of the four houses, turns suddenly round, and informs you, that there is a circumstance strongly confirmatory of the *probability* that the house of Lydia, according to the natural import of the word rendered house or family, contained children, and that in an infantile state. This is, that in ALL the other instances in which adults are mentioned as having been baptized along with the head of the family, they are mentioned as "hearing," and "believing," or terms are used which imply this. Thus he gets himself into a labyrinth. He asserts that the apostles did not baptize the unbelieving adult servants belonging to these families, but that they did baptize their infant children. How can this be, Gentlemen, when it is positively stated in

* Acts viii. 13—23.

the Will that ALL the house of Crispus and Cornelius were baptized, as well as the jailer and ALL his? The circumstance he mentions, instead of confirming the probability that the house of Lydia contained infants, confirms the fact that it did not; for why should Lydia's house differ from the others, especially as her case is mentioned in a similar way. The Lord opened Lydia's heart, and she was baptized, and her household. The jailer said, What must I do to be saved? Believe on the Lord Jesus (was the reply), and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. The expressions are the same in effect. Yet he admits the jailer had no children. After all, Gentlemen, you perceive that this is but STRONGLY CONFIRMATORY of a PROBABILITY. The adverb strongly, however, being here introduced, affords a strong presumption that this Witness is not himself perfectly convinced of the cogency of his reasoning; and to us, who require incontestible demonstration, it is literally good for nothing. This, therefore, which he stated to be an auxiliary argument, I have proved to be no argument whatever. And what we may call his chief argument is of little more weight; for if, as he asserts, he has established his case by proving from the Old Testament alone, independently of proofs from the New, that baptism took the place of circumcision, he forsakes the gospel, which remains and cannot be shaken, and cleaves to the law, which has now vanished away; thus seeking for the living amongst the dead.

None of the Witnesses ventured an opinion whether Lydia had a husband, or any of the said four men had wives, except the NINTH, and he only incidentally, in the case of Stephanas. Now, Gentlemen, is it not natural to presume, that, if these Witnesses had come hither to bear true testimony relative to the forementioned cases, they would have said no more than this—that there are instances where the word house or household may include children; but as we have no means of ascertaining that either Cornelius, the jailer, Lydia, Crispus, or Stephanas were married, we cannot without perjuring ourselves say, whether they had children at all, much less in an infantile state. If they had so said,

they would have shown themselves upright men, and you would have listened to them as such. I know it is in vain to argue the point, that there either were, or were not, females in any of these four houses, there being no proof either way: but as I am allowed to give an opinion, I think there were none,—at least, in some of them,—because there is no allusion to any. The Levitical law made a difference between males and females, and the animals offered for sacrifices chiefly consisted of males. Male children were circumcised, and all the first-born of them were set apart unto the Lord. And it is said, “When a man shall make a singular vow, the persons shall be for the Lord by thy estimation. And thy estimation shall be of the male from twenty years old—fifty shekels of silver. And if it be a female, then thy estimation shall be thirty shekels. And if it be of five years old, then thy estimation shall be of the male twenty shekels, and for the female ten shekels.”* Now, if the four houses contained no women, (and from what is said of Cornelius, it appears his did not; for he was told to send *men* to Joppa, and he sent two of his household servants, and a devout soldier *of them* that waited upon him continually,) people might imagine that a difference still remained; but this is not the case, “For,” now “ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ; there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.”† As a proof of this, we have Lydia and her household mentioned in terms of nearly the same import as the men and their households. Paul says, “And on the Sabbath we went out of the city by a RIVER SIDE, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the WOMEN which resorted thither;” plainly intimating that there were no men in the company besides himself and his companions. And from the concise and simple narrative of the transaction, it appears that Lydia and her household were there and then baptized; consequently it follows that her household must have consisted of females, who were at that time called of

* Lev. xxvii. 2—5.

† Gal. iii. 26—28.

God from among the women who resorted to the river side. The case of Lydia's household must not be taken as an isolated case, as a case that differed from the others, because believing and baptizing are inseparably connected, and the former universally preceded the latter, and must precede it, until "the Lord himself shall descend from heaven,—with the trump of God."* It is contrary to the plain dictates of the Will to believe, that after Paul had had evidence that the Lord had opened the heart of Lydia, and thus prepared her to confess her faith in the ordinance of baptism, he would have baptized her household, unless he had been equally convinced that their hearts had in a similar manner been opened also. This example, like the others, was set us to show, that no individual whatever can be scripturally baptized until after he is taught of the Lord. John wrote "unto the elect lady, and her children," and said, "I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth;" surely then, as John was so particular, mentioning the children of this one family, Paul and Peter would have been equally so, if there had been children in any of these five.

You observed that the FIFTH WITNESS brought forward the following passages, to prove that Paul, in his ignorance of the jailer's family, used the word house to express his children, in the manner in which it was customarily used by his countrymen. "Come thou and all thy house into the ark."† "Let thy house be like the house of Pharez, whom Tamar bare unto Judah, of the seed which the Lord shall give thee of this young woman."‡ "Therefore, behold I will bring evil upon the house of Jeroboam, and will cut off from Jeroboam —him that is shut up and left in Israel; and will take away the remnant of the house of Jeroboam, as a man taketh away dung till it be all gone."§ "Behold, I will take away the posterity of Baasha, and the posterity of his house; and will make thy house like the house of Jeroboam."|| "And I will make thy house like the house of Jeroboam, and like the house of Baasha," &c.¶ These

* 1 Thess. iv. 16. † Gen. vii. 1. ‡ Ruth iv. 12. § 1 Kings xiv. 10.
 || 1 Kings xvi. 3. ¶ 1 Kings xxi. 22.

passages make nothing in favour of the plaintiffs, but against them. In the first, although there were children, they were nearly *a hundred years old*. In the next, there were none (in Boaz's house) at the time the words were spoken; and what is said of the other houses relates to all the posterity of Jeroboam, Baasha, and Ahab. Consequently there can be no parallel here, unless he can prove that Paul baptized all the descendants of the jailer's house.

Now, Gentlemen, I will not only prove to you, by the following passages, that the words house and household do not "properly denote a man's children;" that they are not generally used (as the SIXTH WITNESS asserts they are) to denote these even exclusively; but that when it is intended particularly to show that the house did contain children, the children are mentioned as well as the house; and that wherever either house or household is mentioned in relation to believers, children, by the manner of expression, are uniformly excluded. "For I know him, that he will command HIS CHILDREN and HIS HOUSEHOLD after him."* &c. "And Joseph nourished his father, and HIS BRETHREN, and all his father's HOUSEHOLD with bread," &c. "And four parts shall be your own, for seed of the field, and for food, and for them of your HOUSEHOLDS, and for food for your LITTLE ONES."† "And thou shalt bring thy FATHER, and thy MOTHER, and thy BRETHREN, and ALL THY FATHER'S HOUSEHOLD, home unto thee."‡ "And thou shalt have goat's milk enough for thy food, for the food of thy household, and for the maintenance for thy maidens."§ "And there were born unto him SEVEN SONS and THREE DAUGHTERS. His substance also was seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she asses, and a VERY GREAT HOUSEHOLD."|| "Then I took Jaazaniah, the SON of Jeremiah—and his BRETHREN, and all his SONS, and the WHOLE HOUSE of the Rechabites.—And I set before the SONS of the HOUSE of the Rechabites,"¶ &c. "It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as

* Gen. xviii. 19.

† Gen. xlvii. 12. 24.

‡ Josh. ii. 18.

§ Prov. xxvii. 27.

|| Job i. 2, 3.

¶ Jer. xxxv. 3. 5.

his Lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call THEM (the twelve disciples) of his HOUSEHOLD.”* “Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his Lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season.”† “Cornelius called two of his household (which were) servants.”‡ “Salute Appelles, *approved in Christ*. Salute THEM which are of Aristobulus’ HOUSEHOLD. Greet THEM that be of the HOUSEHOLD of Narcissus, WHICH ARE IN THE LORD.”§ “Let us do good unto all men, especially unto THEM which are of the HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH.”|| “Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but FELLOW-CITIZENS with the saints, and of the HOUSEHOLD OF GOD.”¶ “All the SAINTS salute you, CHIEFLY THEY that are of Cæsar’s HOUSEHOLD.”** “Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their CHILDREN and their own HOUSES well.”††

Notwithstanding you have been told that these (of the five households) are only auxiliary arguments, they are those upon which the plaintiffs CHIEFLY build their doctrine of infant sprinkling. And you must think it strange that they will hazard their claim to the bequest, that is, their ETERNAL SALVATION, upon evidence so weak and inconclusive — evidence which I have proved by the Will to be false, and which in fact is overturned by other portions of the evidence adduced by themselves. But, Gentlemen, you must think it still more strange that the majority of the people of Great Britain, of each class, should suffer themselves, by “much fair speech,” to be decoyed into devious paths by men such as these witnesses.

We now come to consider the following passages; “And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever, therefore, shall humble himself, as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little

* Matt. x. 25.

† Matt. xxiv. 45.

‡ Acts x. 7.

§ Rom. xvi. 10, 11.

|| Gal. vi. 10.

¶ Eph. ii. 19.

** Phil. iv. 22.

†† 1 Tim. 3. 12.

child in my name, receiveth me.”* “Then were brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them and pray : and the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, Suffer the little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me : for of such is the kingdom of heaven. And he laid his hands on them, and departed thence.”† “And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them ; and his disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not : for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.”‡ “And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them : but when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not : for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in nowise enter therein.”§

I shall here beg to remind you, Gentlemen, that it is your province to keep in mind the whole bearing of the Will, and to draw your conclusions accordingly. There is nothing ambiguous in the Testator's words, “of such is the kingdom of heaven ;” and ‘reason requires that a sound, honest meaning be given to plain language.’ These passages are not of such importance to the plaintiff's cause, as they by their Witnesses wish to make it appear ; but still it is my duty to bring them again before you. Compare what the Testator said to Nicodemus, with what he said in these passages to his disciples, and you will clearly perceive that the term little children is used in an emblematical sense only. To the former he said, “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”—“Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”

* Matt. xviii. 2—5.

† Matt. xix. 13—15.

‡ Mark x. 13—16.

§ Luke xviii. 15—17.

To the latter, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Here are four different modes of expression, but they have only one tendency; for it is as impossible for a child to be born again in the emblematical manner spoken of by the Testator, as it is impossible for a man to be literally transformed into a child. This is demonstrated by the following passage, "That which is born of the flesh, is flesh"—*i. e.* in the usual course of nature; for even if it were possible for a man (as Nicodemus inquired) to enter again into the womb, and be born, he would still remain a natural man. "And that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit," *i. e.* born anew by the power of the Spirit of God; translated into the heavenly kingdom; made "heirs of the righteousness which is by faith."* Are children capable of being thus made? '*Of such,*' then, can mean no other than those who are taught by the word, through the influence of the Spirit. These are compared to little children, because like them they receive instruction with a willing and unprejudiced mind. None other, according to these passages, can, compatibly with the promise of the Testator, 'enter into the kingdom of heaven.' This appears to me to be the opinion of the FIRST WITNESS, who says, "As our Lord considers a little child an emblem of a genuine disciple, so by the term 'one such little child,' he means a *disciple only*." If then children are only emblems of disciples, they cannot in reality be "*disciples indeed*." It is also said, that "who-soever shall do and teach" his commandments, "shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."† And further, that "whoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant."‡ This the Testator illustrated when he washed the disciples' feet, and said, "Ye call me Master and Lord; and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done unto you."§

* Heb xi. 7. † Matt. v. 19. ‡ Matt. xx. 27. § John xiii. 13—15.

There is some little variation in the accounts given of these "little children" in the different Gospels; but all our Lord's words and actions relating to them were designed to inculcate a spirit of humility and innocent simplicity, and to show that without it none can be his disciples. His touching and laying hands upon them, was to manifest the great estimation in which he held innocence, meekness, humility, and a teachable disposition, qualities which children possess in an eminent degree; he therefore held them up as fit emblems of the subjects of his kingdom. But it is in vain to reason upon the import or extent of our Lord's blessing, as it is nowhere revealed unto us; and being nowhere revealed unto us, we may rest assured that a knowledge of it would neither benefit us nor our children. Every thing essential to our happiness, either as regards our present or future state, is revealed in a light as clear and bright as that which "shined round about" Paul, when he was first brought to the knowledge of the Lord. But the plaintiffs are not satisfied with this silence of the Divine Testimony; they are determined to supply what in their wisdom appears to be wanting. They therefore tell us that infants were brought to Christ to be "preserved from Satan's power:"* "to be made partakers of the blessings of his (Christ's) kingdom:"† "to receive his official blessing;"‡ Well, even if it were so, is this any reason why they should arrogate to themselves the power of the Testator; and pretend to transform those into children of light, "by sprinkling a few drops of water upon their faces, who (according to their view) are by nature born in sin, and the children of wrath"? Surely the water must have a magical effect! But I am at a loss, Gentlemen, to see any efficacy whatever in the operation: neither does it appear that the NINTH WITNESS sees any; for he boldly asserts that "ALL children, dying before *actual* sin committed, are admitted into heaven." Since (says he) all the children brought to Christ, to receive his blessing, were not likely to die in their infancy, it could not be affirmed that 'of such' is the kingdom of heaven, if that be understood to mean the

* Second Witness.

† Eighth Witness.

‡ Ninth Witness.

state of future happiness exclusively. As children they might all be members of the church on earth ; but not all as children members of the church in heaven, seeing *THEY* (all) might live to become adult, and be cast away."

Here, Gentlemen, mark his inconsistencies ! All are saved who die in infancy : therefore the christened have no advantage over the unchristened, all being without distinction saved. And further, it appears that this blessing of Christ would affect those only who died in infancy, as they might *all* become sinners, and be cast away.

"None (says he) can enter heaven, who do not stand in a vital relation to him, as members of his mystical body." The unchristened do not (by his own account) stand as members, therefore they cannot enter. He makes even our Lord's blessing inefficacious, if they did not die in childhood ; thus bringing down the power of the Lord to his own level ; making the blessing of the Saviour equally inefficacious with sprinkling. On the other hand, if they died in infancy, they were saved, independently either of his sprinkling or the Lord's blessing.

To suppose that children could receive of his Spirit, is contrary to the tenor of the Will ; for we do not read of its being given to any but such as were capable of understanding his word ; it is only by the spiritual application of it to the heart, that any one can be enlightened. Even the apostles, who had been taught by the Testator himself, could not at that time, from the weakness of their understanding, bear many things which he had to say to them.* Is it not, then, incongruous to suppose that the Testator communicated to children that Spirit, which he did not communicate unto his disciples until after his ascension into eternal glory ?

Those whom our Lord compares to the children who were brought to him, were no more children in years, than those were children in years to whom Paul writes thus ; "Brethren, be not children in understanding ; howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men."† The Testator said, "Behold I send you forth as sheep in the midst of

* See John xvi. 12.

† 1 Cor. xiv. 20.

wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.”*

Now, as our Lord compares his disciples to sheep and doves; if, as it is asserted, infants are fit subjects of baptism, because he, in the passages under consideration, represents his disciples as such, with respect to their characters and dispositions; so it might with equal propriety be inferred, that lambs and doves ought also to be sprinkled.

The EIGHTH WITNESS remarked, that “The *light of nature itself* seems plainly to have taught, that young children should be openly devoted to God. It was the custom (says he) of the Romans, on the ninth day from the child’s birth, for its friends and relations to bring it to the temple, and before the *altars of the gods* to recommend it to the protection of some *tutelar deity*. A ceremony of the same nature was also performed among the Greeks.” If he had not afterwards told you ‘that baptism now succeeds to circumcision,’ you might have naturally concluded that he had borrowed the ceremony of christening from the Greeks and Romans.

These Witnesses amuse their flocks with plans and schemes for the salvation of their infants, by telling them that their ‘children which are baptized, dying before they commit actual sin, shall undoubtedly be saved.’ And thus they attempt to put the finishing hand to what they hereby insinuate the Almighty has left defective. The plaintiffs must believe that the child will be lost unless it is christened; or why, as the First Witness remarked, do they “FLY for a minister to baptize it when they suppose it is at the point of death?”

But observe their inconsistencies, Gentlemen! After they, by this ceremony, have made an infant meet to be received into their church, they do not know what to do with it; they therefore leave it, like what is fabled of Mahomet’s coffin, suspended between the earth and the sky. On the one hand, they make the infant a member; and on the other, they refuse it membership. They introduce it into the church, by a rite in which it can take no part; and they refuse it the

* Matt. x. 16.

privilege of membership, by withholding from it the bread and wine of which it is capable of partaking, even in an infantile state. There is in this an inconsistency which none of them can reconcile; and it operates against their system so powerfully, that it cannot be overcome. Of this their Fifth Witness has shown that he is fully sensible, by leaving upon record in this Court the following avowal: "This objection (says he) has in my view a more serious import than any other which has been alleged, and I acknowledge, without hesitation, that the conduct of those with whom I am in immediate communion, and, so far as I know them, their opinions also, with regard to this subject, are in a greater or less degree ERRONEOUS and INDEFENSIBLE." And one and all of them are constrained to confess, that after all their solemn pretensions, they are not empowered to remit one sin. For as soon as the child arrives at an age to be able to know good from evil, their handy work is completely marred; he is found to be "in evil case;" and the noble structure which they have reared crumbles into dust.

It may then be inquired, What benefit does the child derive from being sprinkled at so early a period, the advantages and privileges of which have been so much lauded by our opponents? We can without hesitation safely reply, Not any; "no, in nowise." Christianity, Gentlemen, is a personal matter, lying wholly with the individual himself and his Creator. Nothing done for him by another can affect his eternal state, as an infant, in any way: but if in after life, under the influence of false teaching, he should place any reliance upon the supposed efficacy of this rite, so far from being a blessing, it is a curse and a snare to him; because it induces a false confidence, which soothes him into a persuasion that he is in the way of life, having been, as he supposes, made a child of God: although, according to the Scriptures, he is far off from Him, not having as yet made one step towards the knowledge of his name. Our Lord said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." This was said to a Jew who had been circumcised; and, as our opponents affirm that

baptism has come in lieu of circumcision, and is intended to answer the same purpose under the Christian dispensation, as that rite did under the Jewish ; then it follows, that if by baptism men are made new creatures under the new dispensation, they were by circumcision so made under the old. But our Lord's declaration shows that they were not so made ; that a new birth was necessary to those who had been previously circumcised ; that circumcision did not effect that purpose ; so in like manner would infant sprinkling be equally inefficacious, even if it had the sanction of a divine command. But this, as we have already shown, is not the case. Still it may be (as it has been) said, that if sprinkling a child does it no good, it can at least do it no harm. If our acquiescence in this sentiment will strengthen the cause of our opponents, they are at liberty to make the most of it, for in this we perfectly agree. They may plead, that they who practise infant sprinkling are on the safe side, at least so far as the infant is concerned ; for according to our admission it cannot injure the child, while according to their's it is of vital importance ; and therefore they think they cannot be wrong in attending to it. We readily grant, as before intimated, that the mere ceremony cannot injure the individual ; unless in after life it lead him to rest in carnal security, and thus go down to the grave with "a lie in his right hand."

Gentlemen, in whatever light we view the ceremony of infant sprinkling, the consequences are of fatal tendency, both to the christeners and the christened. It is a system of falsehood throughout. The priest, in the first place, causes the sponsors to promise before God what he knows it is impossible they can perform. He puts to them the question following, "Dost thou, in the name of this child, renounce the devil and all his works?" They severally answer, "I renounce them all." Then as soon as the child can well speak, the parents, the schoolmaster, and the priest teach the child to utter a falsehood, by putting to it the question, "Who gave you this name?" To which it is taught to answer, "My godfathers and my godmothers, in my BAPTISM, WHEREIN I WAS MADE a member of Christ, the child of God,

and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." And "upon Sundays and holidays, the curate SHALL diligently instruct and examine the child," and make him repeat this GLARING falsehood as often as he shall think it convenient. When the child is thought sufficiently versed in these things, "The curate shall" make it known to the bishop "in writing with his hand subscribed thereunto;" and the bishop crowns the whole by saying to the child, "Do ye here, in the presence of God, and of this congregation, renew the solemn promise and vow that was made in your name (*i. e.* to renounce the devil and all his works), confirming the same in your own person?" To this he answers, as previously taught, "I do." "And (it is said) there shall none be admitted to the Holy Communion until such time as he has been confirmed, or be ready and desirous to be confirmed." Then he may, if he think proper, eat of The Supper for the first time: or if he think otherwise, he may continue to live, as he lived before, in the neglect thereof; it being optional with himself to eat of it, or decline it; for whether he eat, or eat not, he is an acknowledged member of the Church of England.

Now, Gentlemen, observe what a contradiction is involved in the Rubrick: it says a child is, and it teaches a child to believe, that it was made a member of Christ, &c. when it was christened; yet it does not acknowledge him as such until after he is, or is ready to be confirmed. This, as the Fifth Witness truly asserts, "is irreconcilable with any scriptural views of the nature and importance of the sacrament." This incongruity is little observed; parents send their children to be confirmed, as they do to be christened, as a matter of course; and as a matter of course they are confirmed, "heirs of God," notwithstanding all the iniquity that they may have committed since they were christened. And this involves a still greater contradiction; for the Rubric does not guarantee their salvation any longer than they remain free from actual transgression: nevertheless the children are informed that "all things" essential to their salvation "have been done as they ought

to be:" and they are warned (according to the First Witness) that "it is an awful thing to iterate baptism."

Thus the solemn mockery is completed; but an awful responsibility is hereby incurred by those who administer the rite. They will have to answer for all the fatal consequences resulting therefrom. "BECAUSE they have transgressed the laws, CHANGED THE ORDINANCE, *broken the everlasting covenant.*"*

Listen, Gentlemen, to what has been said by a clergyman of the Established Church; 'All sponsors are believers; all the baptized are regenerate; all the confirmed forgiven; all the catechumens elect; all kings religious; all the dead subjects of thankfulness;—to the total oblivion of the present and eternal distinction between the saved and the lost. The consequence glares and blazes, in the feelings of self-satisfaction which our poor deluded victims enjoy, as supposing all their sins are blotted out,—not by having boldness to enter into the holiest by the new and living way, but as obeying the demands of the church; and in such demand seeing nothing to disturb a guilty, nor to soothe a penitent mind; I mean seeing nothing of this with such distinctness as would be the case if the liturgical language were as clear, cautionary, and guarded as we adopt in protecting our worldly interests.'

On the one hand, the witnesses endeavour to persuade you that they were believing parents who brought their children to the Lord; and that no children will be saved unless they are devoted to God by sprinkling: and on the other hand, most of them either assert, or give you reason to conclude, that they derive little or no benefit therefrom.

The FIRST says, "Let every parent that fears God bring up his children in that fear, and by baptism let each be *dedicated* to the Holy Trinity. Whatever is solemnly consecrated to God, ABIDES under his protection and blessing."

Here, Gentlemen, he clearly implies that the heirship is secured to all those who are thus dedicated; and that con-

* Is. xxiv. 5.

sequently those who are not so dedicated suffer loss to an equal extent as the others are advantaged thereby. But what proof does he bring of either of these positions? Why this, that "no soul can prove that they cannot be benefited" by being sprinkled. Thus the proof amounts to no more than a mere negative, and consequently leaves both the christened and the unchristened, much in the same state as they were before. And further, in another place, he implies that this dedication is merely a *nominal* thing.

The SECOND, that "as all that were *without* the ark *perished*, and all within the ark were saved; so all that are ingrafted into Christ by faith, whereof baptism is a seal, are *saved*, whilst the unbelieving and unbaptized perish. Baptism is such a mean of *spiritual* salvation now, as the ark was of Noah's and his family's salvation then."

If christening then be considered, like the ark, the means of salvation, all the unchristened must undoubtedly perish. But lest this should be deemed too bold an assertion, he qualifies it, by adding that unchristened infants are *not damned*, it not being the want of christening which *condemns*, but the *contempt* of it.

The THIRD, that baptism is (by the 27th Article of the Church) not only a sign of profession, and a mark of *difference*, whereby *christian men* are discerned from others that are NOT CHRISTENED: but it is also a sign of regeneration or *new birth*, whereby, as an *instrument*, they that receive baptism rightly are *grafted into the church*: the promises of forgiveness of sin, and of our *adoption to be sons of God*, are VISIBLY SIGNED AND SEALED. Such is the doctrine of the church with regard to regeneration: for in conformity with this she *requires* her ministers to instruct the people, that the baptism of their children ought not to be deferred longer than till the first or second Sunday after their birth, LEST (as one of her *most highly esteemed* bishops hath observed) IMPORTUNE and unnecessary delay occasion that the child die before it is *dedicated to the service of God and the religion of our Lord Jesus Christ, before it be born again, admitted to the promise of the Gospel, and reckoned in the*

account of the second Adam. And she accordingly pronounces, what gives the doctrine that I (says he) am maintaining, its *great practical importance*, that "it is certain, by God's word, that children WHICH ARE BAPTIZED, dying before they commit actual sin, are UNDOUBTEDLY SAVED."

We do not read anything in the Will to lead us to suppose that the Lord makes any difference with regard to innocents; they must be all upon a par in his sight. Neither is there any thing of a discouraging nature respecting their future well being; but on the contrary; for it is said to Rachel; "Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears: for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy (death). And there is hope in thine end, saith the Lord, that thy children shall come again to their own border."* This border, though not made known unto us, will be found the place best adapted for their eternal bliss. Yet that bliss will unquestionably be of a different nature to that which those shall enjoy who are created anew in Christ Jesus, and are made heirs with him "in the kingdom of their Father."

The idea of the FOURTH WITNESS "always was, that not the privilege of the infant, but the duty of the parent, is the grand thing to be ascertained." Here another standing is taken. The infant is wholly overlooked; the parents' duty being the grand consideration. The want of scriptural authority for what has been advanced causes this confusion of ideas. One says one thing, and another another. But this Witness, from his natural good understanding, knows that innocents cannot have deserved the wrath of God, and that christening cannot avail it in any wise; but as he is from custom determined to have the rite performed, all the advantages thereof are to be appropriated by the parents.

The FIFTH says, that when children die in infancy, and are *scripturally dedicated to God in baptism*, there is *much*, and very consoling, reason furnished to *believe* that they are accepted beyond the grave. And mark, Gentlemen, he

* Jer. xxxi. 16—17.

further says, "there is (he thinks) reason to hope well concerning other children dying in infancy;" and he implies that children are not entitled to baptism in their own right. What are we to make of this indecisive manner of giving his evidence? There is much hope, he says, of the christened! There is reason to hope well of the unchristened! Observe, then, the great value of this dedication! It amounts, according to his opinion, to the difference between "much hope," and the "reason to hope well"!

The SIXTH, that "*baptism teaches very significantly that even from the womb children are the subjects of pollution; that they stand in need of participation in the pardon of original apostacy, and of purification from the inherent depravity of their nature, IN ORDER TO THEIR ENTERING HEAVEN AND SEEING GOD.*"

Gentlemen, is not this a singular mode of proceeding; first to institute a rite, that shall indicate the existence of a thing, and then, from that inferred existence of the thing, to assume the necessity of the rite? All that has before been stated in favour of these little innocents being proper subjects of baptism, because they were 'of such' that composed the kingdom of heaven, is forgotten. They are now the subjects of pollution from the womb, standing in need of pardon for original apostacy: so that they who were before christened for their meetness for the kingdom of heaven, are now christened to purify them from inherent depravity.

The evidence of this witness, like that of the preceding one, is vacillating; after all we have heard of the necessity and utility of christening infants, he says, "We (the plaintiffs) do not consider the outward rite as essential to salvation; far be it from us to deny that infants may be acknowledged to be of the kingdom of God without baptizing them;—far be it from us to pass any sentence of exclusion against the children of our Baptist brethren." Now, Gentlemen, this infant sprinkling, or effusion, must be either right or wrong; it is either required by the Testator, or it is not. If he think that it is required, he is bound, as a professing minister of the Gospel, to declare it, and warn those whom he calls his

Baptist brethren of their cruelty to their children; he ought not to 'halt between two opinions,' endeavouring to conciliate parties so much opposed to each other. He should manfully support the cause which he came hither to defend, and not compromise it. But if he find the position he has taken untenable, let him relinquish it at once, and acknowledge that he is "WRONG."

Does not his own conduct sufficiently show the folly of the system; and that it deserves all the ridicule with which he says it is assailed? He excludes a portion of the children of his own congregation, by not applying to them the SIGN, which he applies to those "who (according to him) are capable of the *thing signified*;" and this merely because he does not reckon their parents believers: thus tacitly avowing that the children of such parents are not "subjects of the kingdom;" and yet he does not pass sentence of exclusion against the unchristened children of his opponents. Is there not an incongruity here, which he would do well to explain? It appears to him that "infant baptism" is the privilege of the parent, rather than that of the child; will he say that the child enters heaven through the privilege granted to the parent? And if the rite be requisite, to cleanse it from its original apostacy; will he say that those can enter heaven who have never been "purified" thereby? Let him answer these questions!

The SEVENTH, that "without baptism, as the sign of the covenant of God, we are taught that NO ONE can ENJOY THE SALVATION OF GOD. It corresponds in this respect with what is said, Gen. xvii. 14, "The uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that SOUL SHALL BE CUT OFF FROM HIS PEOPLE; HE HATH BROKEN MY COVENANT." No assertion can be put in stronger language. Now mark how he qualifies it; "We mean not (says he) to assert, that baptism is absolutely indispensable to salvation." And mark again his wavering; "But certainly (says he) there is a meaning not to be *despised* in the two following passages, John iii. 5, and Mark xvi. 16, in which the ordinance, as well as the blessing it comprises, is

expressly mentioned." You see, Gentlemen, that he is bewildered, the subject is above his comprehension.

The EIGHTH, that "it is most evident that infants may be, yea are to be, received in Christ's name; and by this we are to understand, receiving them as belonging, or standing in some peculiar relation, to Christ; an infant can NO OTHERWISE STAND, than by being SOLEMNLY DEVOTED to him, and admitted into his kingdom and church—that as they are condemned through the first Adam, and treated as sinners, so they should be justified through the second Adam, and treated as righteous. But if they were to be treated as righteous, and to be solemnly declared a part of that society, or church, whom Christ came to save, they were to be baptized, for BAPTISM WAS THE CEREMONY IN WHICH ALL who by God's command had a RIGHT to salvation, were to be admitted into the church, and solemnly declared of the number saved."

This witness does not understand the text* upon which he argues. He does not distinguish between a babe in years, and a babe in Christ. The meaning of "receiving one such little child," is made plain to the most common understanding, where it is said, "Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones," meaning his disciples, or any righteous man, "a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple—he shall in no wise lose his reward." But no unbaptized person can, according to the Will, be either received, or acknowledged, as one of these little ones.

Infants, it is true, are condemned through the sin of Adam, but their condemnation extends no further than subjecting them to temporal death; and even when they are 'taken away,' it may be said of them, as it is said of the righteous, "they are taken away from the evil to come."† Adam's sin does not, and cannot, subject them to the second death. This death is reserved for those only who are capable of committing sin, those who die in their sins through unbelief. It is for them to be ever dying, and never knowing release from pain. Now, Gentlemen, observe that this witness, in one part of

* Matt. xviii. 5.

† Isa. lvii. 1.

his testimony, would in his way lead you to suppose that infants are to be received in Christ's name; that they have a RIGHT to salvation; and that their being baptized is a solemn declaration that they are of the NUMBER SAVED. Then he gives you his definition of the word salvation, as he here uses it, which is this—A PROBABILITY that “the dying infants of *good* men, which, according to God's command, have been solemnly devoted to him, whom he hath acknowledged for HIS CHILDREN, and to whom he hath by a sacred covenant PROMISED TO BE A GOD; will *somewhere or other* be placed in a state of probation, under circumstances far more advantageous and favourable than others.”

Here, Gentlemen, another new doctrine is advanced,—one directly opposed to all scripture testimony on that subject,—a probation in the world to come! This, however, is but the natural consequence of dissenting from the Will: and the evidence of the Witnesses, departing as it does from this invariable standard, is but a labyrinth of errors. Sensible of the awkwardness of the position in which they stand, they have recourse to one artifice after another to relieve themselves from embarrassment.

The NINTH WITNESS says that “No ONE can be of the KINGDOM OF GOD IN HEAVEN, who does not stand in a vital, sanctifying relation to Christ, as the head of his mystical body, the church on earth, *the initiatory rite into every part of which church* is BAPTISM.”

According to the reasoning of this Witness, therefore, every infant who dies unchristened, never having been inducted into the visible church, is shut out of the kingdom of heaven. Yet he contradicts himself, when he says, “We willingly admit that ALL children, dying before actual sin committed, are ADMITTED INTO HEAVEN through the merits of Christ.” Thus he vitiates his own evidence; and, after taking up so much of your time in the vain endeavour to prove the necessity and utility of sprinkling infants, he turns round (as in other instances, according as it suits the point which he wishes to establish), and tells you it is a useless rite, the unsprinkled, as well as the sprinkled, being saved.

And what could you expect, Gentlemen, but prevarication, from a Witness who came into Court predetermined to support a doctrine, which, if we may judge from other parts of his evidence, he knew to be indefensible.

This Witness continues, "Since all the children brought to Christ to receive his blessing were not likely to die in their infancy, but some might live to become adult, and be cast away; it could not be affirmed that" such "were of the kingdom of heaven." And again; "the previous relation of infants to Christ, as accepted by him, is an argument for their baptism, not against it; seeing it is by that that they are visibly recognized as the formal members of his church, and have the full grace of the covenant confirmed and sealed unto them; with increase of grace as they are fitted to receive it: besides the advantage of visible connexion with the church, and of that obligation which is taken upon themselves by their parents to train them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. In both views, then, of such is the kingdom of God, members of his church on earth, and of his church in heaven, IF THEY DIE IN INFANCY, for one is necessarily involved in the other."

We cannot, scripturally speaking, say that infants have the same previous relation to Christ that believers have. For the Testator said, "My mother and my brethren are those which hear the word of God, and do it."* Infants cannot be included in this relationship; why then are they christened? By his own showing, if the unchristened die in infancy, they are on a par with the christened; and if they do not die in infancy, their cases are similar: therefore whether they die or live, there is no difference between them; save and except that the christened are "visibly recognized as the formal members of the church on earth." Mark, Gentlemen, FORMAL members only. Behold, then, the extent of this their so much boasted privilege! Again, according to the Will, baptized believers go on increasing in the knowledge of God, until they are filled with the knowledge of his will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding."† But this

* Luke viii. 21.

† Col. i. 9.

the Witness reverses in the case of sprinkled infants; they have first the full grace of the covenant, *confirmed* and *sealed* unto them; and then, if they live, they go on decreasing it, until they lose it altogether.

The Tenth, as far as I am able to understand him, did not come hither to bear evidence either for or against the use, or the abuse, of infant sprinkling; but to endeavour to prove that being put under water is not the *ONLY* baptism which the Testator required of the heirs of his kingdom. He does not understand the import of this great and primary New Testament ordinance, as instituted by the Word of God; but, being "wise in his own conceit," he fancies that the way in which the Holy Spirit introduces, in several passages, the words baptized and baptizing, gives him a fair opportunity of turning it into ridicule; he will find, however, that such conduct will not add to his popularity in this Court, whatever it may do elsewhere.

Now, Gentlemen, although it appears to be pretty generally supposed, by the majority of the plaintiffs, that the eternal state of an infant is not secure without a little of the helping hand of man previously to its departure hence, it does not appear to be the opinion of any of their Witnesses, except the Third; and he only thinks so because it is according to the twenty-seventh article of his church; and because "ONE OF HER MOST HIGHLY ESTEEMED BISHOPS" cautions parents not to deprive their children, by importune delay, of the advantages attendant on their being dedicated. I presume it is thought politic to let the people remain in ignorance on this subject; although sometimes it is incautiously let out in other places, as it has been in this Court, that christening an infant is altogether a useless ceremony. For instance, expressions such as the following have occasionally fallen from ministers of the Establishment, when they happened to arrive a minute or two too late, *i. e.* after the child has died. "Well, poor innocent, we have no fear of its happiness; although it is a pleasant thing to devote it to the Lord!" Devote what? A DYING CHILD! Notwithstanding this expression,—we have no fear of the

happiness of the departed innocent,—what follows is expressive of some anxiety as to its future felicity ; for unless the child could be benefited by the dedication, why should it afford the minister any pleasure ?

In times now happily gone by, the national religion was supported by the sword—but we can never be sufficiently thankful that we are placed under a mild and liberal government, which permits every man to sit “under his vine and under his fig-tree,” none daring to make him afraid ; he may stand up in his Master’s cause without fear, and not only even question (upon scriptural authority) the polity of that church which is supported by the state, but give his opinions all the publicity in his power. We therefore, with humble boldness, withstand the plaintiffs, because we deem them worthy of blame. Our contest is not against worldly powers ; we seek not in *any way* to deprive them of their revenues, nor to intermeddle with the management of their spiritual or temporal affairs ; but we contend “against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickednesses in high places,”*—against those who have gained an ascendancy over men’s minds,—those who propagate error under the semblance of truth. “The weapons of our warfare,” Gentlemen, “are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds,”†—“the opposition of science, FALSELY so called.” It is in vain for our opponents to attempt to alter the form, or to take a stone here and there out of this strong hold, replacing it by another, by way of strengthening the building, or beautifying its exterior. The structure is not based upon a solid foundation, therefore neither repairs nor beautifying can preserve it ; it must ultimately be levelled with the ground ; and the “WORD OF TRUTH,” according to the commission given to Jeremiah, shall be fulfilled. “See (saith the Lord), I have this day set thee over the nations, and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant.”‡ Or, as it is said in Ezekiel,§ “I will overturn, overturn, overturn it ; and it shall be no more, until he come whose

* Eph. vi. 12.

† 2 Cor. x. 4.

‡ Jer. i. 10.

§ Ezek. xxi. 27.

right it is ; and I will give it him." In short, Dagon must fall "upon his face to the ground before the ark of the Lord,"* and not even a *stump* be left to him.

The FIRST, SECOND, THIRD, and SIXTH WITNESSES admit that the Testator instructed his disciples that they should be converted, and become as little children.

The FIFTH says that "such an interpretation is undeserving of refutation."

The EIGHTH, that "if our Lord meant his disciples to understand 'of such,' to mean of a child-like disposition, his *conduct* would be *extremely absurd*."

The NINTH, "The absurdity that 'of such,' means of such like, is its own refutation." But, Gentlemen, I appeal to you, and ask if the absurdity be not in the opposite inference? To affirm that the conduct of the Lord, under any circumstances, could be absurd, I consider a very great licence, and to savour of blasphemy. When his name is called in question, it should be with the most profound reverence and humility.

Although the First, Second, and Sixth admit that in one sense the words 'of such' applied to a disciple, yet they say or intimate that in *another* they applied to children, and were designed to show that the kingdom of God is composed '*of such*' *literally*. According to the Fourth, the kingdom of heavenly glory is chiefly constituted of such. Then, if they be correct, and the kingdom of heaven *is composed* of infants, and they themselves are to become *like* 'such' infants, the same question as Nicodemus put to our Lord may well be put to them—"How can these things be?" And you, Gentlemen, will naturally enquire, "Are ye masters in Israel, and know not these things?"†

This is the reason why the plaintiffs take upon themselves to give to infants such a qualification as the whole bearing of the Will shows to be impossible ; as impossible, indeed, as it would be for men to enter the invisible kingdom, who were debarred therefrom until they should be previously transformed into children in years. And after all this, they

* 1 Sam. v. 4.

† See John iii. 9—10.

tell you that the induction in question is unnecessary; or, that if it be omitted it does not much alter their case.

I shall here make a remark upon the following question put by the Second Witness; "If Christ denies not infants the kingdom of heaven, which is the greater, what reason have his ministers to deny them the benefit of baptism, which is the less?" Even here, Gentlemen, 'you will observe there is an IF, and until the God of truth shall be pleased to change this *if* into a certainty, the conclusion can have no foundation: for although the plaintiff's witnesses bring forward many passages by which they pretend to prove the salvation of infants, it yet remains one of those "secret things" which belong to God. Men may conjecture, but God has nowhere expressed it in his word. If we take upon ourselves to assert that the words "of such is the kingdom of heaven," are to be understood of infants literally, and that they are in a state of salvation, still we must confess it is in a way unknown to us; for the Testator has not informed us of any other way of salvation, but by faith; and it is impossible that infants can have faith. We know that baptism is only a sign, and we know also that the sign cannot be administered, according to the true intent of it, to any but those who have faith in the thing signified'; for none can be scripturally baptized until they are taught from "the Oracles of God." But why speak of children being in a state of salvation, when they have never committed sin, are not under its dominion, and consequently are not exposed to the second death, which follows the commission of it; for "sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."*

The THIRD Witness says that "every unbeliever, and every sinner, ALTHOUGH MADE BY BAPTISM A MEMBER OF CHRIST, AND A CHILD OF GOD, must be in a certain sense *converted*, if he would *ultimately* succeed to his inheritance of the kingdom of heaven." Now, Gentlemen, what is this, but telling all those who have been brought up under the fostering care of the Church, (and who have been made to say a thousand times, "I heartily thank our heavenly Father that he HATH CALLED ME TO THIS STATE OF SALVATION, through

* James i. 15.

Jesus Christ our Saviour,") that the Church has deceived them, that it has not made them actually what it professes to have made them; that in their present state they have no claim under the Will, and that if they shall ultimately succeed to it, they must be converted and taught of God. In short, it is a candid confession that his predecessors, who built the tower, "did not first sit down and count the cost;" for certainly all that behold it may take up the language of mockery, and say, "These men began to build, and were not able to finish."* They for a time have deceived the inexperienced, by putting on their edifice a fair outside; but the messengers appointed to make known the purport of the Will, by the power given them by the Testator, have scraped off the "untempered mortar" with which the builders "daubed it," and thus exposed to general view the weakness and unsubstantial form of the superstructure. It is the word going forth in power that shakes it, and stone after stone is falling, in such rapid succession, as to surprise even the descendants of the early architects. What remains of it is "as a bowing wall, and as a tottering fence;" † a monument of the folly of the builders. The time is fast approaching, which, according to the prophecies of Daniel and of the Revelator, will bring destruction upon every house which is not established upon the Rock of ages, and they shall be desolate, like the proud city of which Seraiah said, after he had bound a stone to the prophetic book, and "cast it into the midst of Euphrates, Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her." ‡ "Then (it is said in Zephaniah) will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may ALL call upon the name of the Lord, TO SERVE HIM WITH ONE CONSENT." §

I now shall draw your attention to the evidence given on 1 Cor. vii. 14; "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean, but now are they holy."

The FIRST Witness says, that "if this kind of relative sanctification were not allowed, the children of those parents

* Luke xiv. 29.

† Psa. lxii. 3.

‡ Jer. li. 63, 64.

§ Zeph. iii. 8, 9.

could not be received into the Christian church." To this I answer, that the New Testament nowhere informs us, either directly or indirectly, that the church of Christ ever received into its communion infants of any sort; and whatever Tertullian may say of infants being consecrated, it can be no argument with men who are determined to abide by the plain and simple import of the Will. The quotation from his work only shows us that he considered every one to be a Christian, who merely adopted the name, and refrained from some of the enormities of the heathen.

The SECOND, that "the children of believing parents are not common and unclean, like the children of infidels." But God showed Peter, by a vision, that the Gentile was no more unclean than the Jew. And it is neither a "bold practising" upon the Scriptures, nor a "wracking," nor a "wresting" of the word of God (as this witness asserts that it is), to maintain, that the children being called holy means no more than that they are legitimate, by the same rule as the husband or wife being called sanctified meant nothing more than that the calling of the one did not annul their marriage contract. It is contrary to the Will to suppose that the calling of the one could confer any inherent sanctification on the other. And it is manifest that it did not, because it is said in the next verse but one, "For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?" And it would not be forcing the Scriptures to say, what knowest thou, O wife, or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt be made instrumental to the salvation of thy children? The apostle Paul, so far from making any difference as to children, declares that "God hath made of one blood all nations of men," and that "there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek;" consequently, there can be no difference in their children, so long as they remain in an infant state. This witness accuses the Jews of "bragging" of "their natural birth and descent from Abraham, as being of his blood and offspring;" and asserts that "men become not the children of God by natural propaga-

tion," and that "no external privilege or prerogative whatever, without faith in Christ, is any whit available to salvation." Yet, Gentlemen, this is he who asseverates, that the HOLY seed of Christians is not common and unclean like the children of infidels, but seminally holy; for which reason he says they "ought to be admitted to baptism, and receive the sign of the Christian covenant, the laver of regeneration, and so be entered into the society of the Christian church."

'The sanctification of the unbelieving wife to the believer, being opposed to the legal uncleanness of an alien to a Jew, must relate purely to the marriage relation, and signify that she was a lawful wife to him; even as the meats formerly held unclean by the law of Moses, were now sanctified to him, or made lawful for his use.* And of what other sanctification or holiness can we suppose an unbeliever capable? The apostle further observes, that unless their unbelieving wives were thus sanctified, their children also would be unclean. The uncleanness of the children, being stated as a consequence of the supposed unlawfulness of the unbelieving party, must necessarily signify illegitimacy; for though they were begotten in marriage, yet upon supposition that the marriage itself be unlawful, they must in consequence have been an unlawful issue: and their being called holy can signify nothing more than their being legitimate—as opposed to their uncleanness as before explained. As the unbelieving party is sanctified, only in respect of being a lawful husband or wife to the unbelieving one, so the children can have no holiness in consequence of this, but that of being a lawful issue.' Surely, then, this affords no argument for the christening of children. In fact, I cannot see how the apostle could have expressed himself in a clearer manner, unless he had accommodated his language more to the understanding of these witnesses, and substituted the word 'bastards' for 'unclean,' and 'lawful' for 'holy.'

We were previously led to believe that sprinkling infants succeeded to circumcision; but now we are told, by

The EIGHTH WITNESS, "that our Lord himself, when an

* 1 Tim. iv. 3—5.

infant, passed under a sacred ceremony, of the same nature with our infants when we bring them to be baptized; and that the several Scriptures (1 Cor. vii. 14, and Luke ii. 22, 23,) being impartially weighed, the propriety and fitness of bringing children to baptism SEEMS to be established beyond all rational doubt." But, Gentlemen, this is not a legitimate inference. In the former text, we are not told that the children were subjected to any ceremony: but in the latter, we are informed that our Lord, like every other Jewish male that opened the womb, was called holy; that he was brought by his parents to Jerusalem; and that on the forty-second day after his birth they presented him to the Lord, and offered a sacrifice "according to that which is said in the law, 'A pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons.'" Now if the plaintiffs take this as their authority, they depart from it in a very unaccountable manner. They not only pay no regard to the forty-second day after the birth of the child, but they reckon all the successive children holy, whether male or female, as well as the first. Whereas, according to the law of purification,* if they take that as a precedent for their unscriptural rite, they should only bring the FIRST-BORN to be christened, and that *only* in the event of its being a male, and even then only on the forty-second day. And if they take the law of circumcision for their authority, they ought to christen on the eighth day, and only on that day, and then the males only. But, in fact, they neither follow the law of purification, nor yet that of circumcision. They pay no attention either to the forty-second, or to the eighth day, but blend the two rites together, and follow the example of neither.

The FOURTH says, "Something more must be meant by the believer 'sanctifying' the unbelieving party, than merely legalizing the marriage; for that would have been valid and lawful if both had been unbelievers, and the children would not really be more 'holy' in respect of their nature if one parent was a believer, than if both were unbelievers. But as the word 'unclean' is frequently used in a relative sense,

* See Lev. 12th chapter.

denoting unfit to be admitted unto God's ordinances, and 'holy,' the contrary,—as in this sense the male children of the Jews were 'holy,' and so the partakers of circumcision, while those of the Gentiles, and even such as had one idolatrous parent, were 'unclean,' and excluded from circumcision,—I cannot (says he) but conclude—that the baptism of the infant offspring of Christians is here evidently referred to, as at that time customary in the churches; and that the Corinthians knew that this was not objected to, when only one parent was a Christian."

Paul, in answer to some questions that had been proposed by the Corinthians respecting marriage, says, "that this is good for the present distress—for a man so to be" (unmarried). And to the unmarried and widows, he says, "It is good for them if they abide even as I." But although he gave this advice, it was not to affect those who had been already married, whether believers or unbelievers. He admonishes these to remain as they were. Therefore, in the event of a husband or wife being called of the Lord, it should make no difference in the marriage relation; for if that should disannul the marriage contract, the children would thereby be rendered illegitimate. But if the unbelieving husband or wife chose of their own free will to "depart" from the believer, "a brother or a sister was not under bondage in such cases;" and where that was the case, the separation would not affect the legitimacy of their children.

Whatever state a believer was in when he was called, he was to use no unlawful means to change it. "Art thou called being a servant? Care not for it." "Is any called in uncircumcision? Let him not become circumcised." The Corinthians did not doubt the marriage of unbelievers being legal; their doubt appears to have been, if one of them were to be called of God, whether that circumstance would make it illegal. Paul tells them it would not, "else were your children unclean," or illegitimate. And he shows that one of them being called was an advantage, as it might be the means in the hands of God of saving the other. Every Jew was commanded to circumcise his child. We do not read

in the scriptures of any exception. Nor do we read of children under any circumstances being reckoned ceremoniously unclean; nor of any children being called "holy," except "the male that openeth the womb." These only were devoted to the Lord. But, Gentlemen, I am taking up your time unnecessarily. The Lord said to Abraham, "Every man child among you shall be circumcised—he that is born in thy house, or bought with money of any stranger which is not of thy seed."* Here you see a child was to be circumcised, both of whose parents were idolaters.

The New Testament gives no instructions either directly or indirectly respecting infants; whatever meaning, therefore, we may attach to the term "holy," in the passage before us, it can have nothing to do with baptism. But if, as the witnesses say, the rite of sprinkling succeeded to circumcision, and if it ought to be administered to the same subjects as circumcision was under the old dispensation, how does it happen, Gentlemen, that this witness argues that it ought only to be administered to the children of Christian parents, or to children one of whose parents at least was a Christian; and more especially as he acts contrary to his own principles, and christens every child that may by chance be brought to him for that purpose; although in most cases he well knows that the parents are unbelievers?

We now come to the clause in 1 Cor. x. 1, 2; "MOREOVER, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea. And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." On which,

The FIRST WITNESS remarks, that "The children of Israel were all baptized unto Moses. Rather *into* Moses,—into the covenant of which Moses was the mediator; and by this typical baptism, they were brought under the obligation of acting according to the Mosaic precepts; as Christians, receiving Christian baptism, are said to be baptized into Christ, and are thereby brought under obligation to keep the precepts of the gospel." This is a correct explanation of the

* Gen. xvii. 10—12.

passage, and he would have been wise if he had contented himself with this explanation; but his head being filled with the idea of sprinkling infants, he, like the other Witnesses, supposes that *the* cloud, the symbol of God's presence, was only *a* common cloud, containing aqueous vapours. This to me appears contrary to the fact, as it is said, "the Lord went before them by day in a *pillar* of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night."* "And in the morning ye shall see (the cloud) the *glory* of the Lord."† It shows a perversity of disposition in any one who imagines such a cloud as this to be composed of "*aqueous particles*," or that from a cloud which was the symbol of God's presence should descend rain; and more especially to plead this circumstance as an excuse for sprinkling infants. But this is of the same character as other parts of their evidence. They compare the bright shining light of the dispensation of our Lord, with the "blackness, and darkness, and tempest of Mount Sinai."‡ Besides, if the cloud performed the threefold office, and supplied the Israelites with a sufficiency of "aqueous particles, not only to cool the atmosphere, and to give *refreshment* to themselves and their cattle, but to supply them so abundantly as thoroughly to envelop or suffuse them; why did they murmur on the third day because they had no water? Or where was the necessity of the Lord supplying them with water out of the rock, if, as this Witness states, they had such an abundant supply from the cloud? Did he never read Isaiah's allusion to this cloud? "The Lord will create upon every dwelling-place of Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and *smoke* by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for upon all the glory shall be a defence."§ Or what does he mean by saying the apostle represents them as being sprinkled or immersed? the terms are not synonymous. He came hither to prove that they were sprinkled.

The SECOND says, "Their passage seemed to be BURIED in the waters, as persons in that age were PUT UNDER THE

* Exod. xiii. 21.

† Exod. xvi. 7—10.

‡ Heb. xii. 18.

§ Isa. iv. 5.

WATER when they were baptized." Now, if in that day, when people were put under water, they were said to be baptized, and if this "were a figure to which our baptism answers," how comes it to pass that the word baptize has not the same meaning now as it had then? A satisfactory answer to this question will show that it means immersion, in ALL CASES where it is applied to the ordinance of the Testator. And it will also show that sprinkling a child is not figurative of the baptism he describes.

The FOURTH, "Thus they (the Israelites) were initiated by baptism into the true religion, under the instruction of Moses, the type of Christ; by the overshadowing cloud, and by the waters of the sea: and the whole nation, men, women, and children, were acknowledged as the visible church of God, in a manner which resembled that by which all professed Christians were admitted into the church at baptism."

I presume he means, that the children, by passing with their parents through the Red Sea, were thus acknowledged as a part of the visible church of God; and consequently that it is a precedent for the induction of infants by the rite of sprinkling into the same church. But if, as he says, it was a resemblance of the baptism of professed Christians, how can it at the same time resemble infant sprinkling? things so entirely different from each other.

The FIFTH WITNESS informs us, that "there is no account whatever in Exod. xiv. 19, 20, of the baptism mentioned by St. Paul, but that what Moses omitted, Asaph has particularly recorded, in the 77th Psalm; and he adds, "*happily for us*, we have so particular an account of this transaction." But, unfortunately for our opponents, he is mistaken. Asaph is commemorating the great power of God, and commences with the actual deliverance of his people from Egyptian bondage—"Thou hast with thine arm redeemed thy people, the sons of Jacob and Joseph;" then the account of their passage, "The waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee; they were afraid; the depths also were troubled;" then the account of the seventh sign, by which God showed his great power unto Pharaoh, "The clouds poured out water;

the skies sent out a sound: thine arrows also went abroad. The voice of thy thunder was in the heaven: the lightnings lightened the world: the earth trembled and shook." Now, Moses particularly describes the terrific sign, in the ninth chapter of Exodus: "I will at this time send ALL my plagues upon thine heart, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people. To-morrow, I will cause it to *rain* a very grievous hail, such as hath not been in Egypt since the foundation thereof, even until now. And the Lord sent thunder and hail, and the fire ran along upon the ground, and the Lord *rained* hail upon the land of Egypt. So there was hail, and *fire* mingled with the hail, very grievous. And Moses spread abroad his hands unto the Lord: and the *thunder* and hail ceased, and the *rain* was not *poured* upon the earth." This account has no relation to the crossing of the Red Sea; none of these dreadful signs either preceded or accompanied that event. When the people murmured, being afraid of the Egyptians, the order given to Moses was simply this,— "Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward: but lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it:—and Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea DRY LAND, and the waters were divided. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the DRY ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand and on their left." This witness asserts that the Israelites were not even sprinkled by the sea, much less immersed, and that there is no account that they were baptized in the cloud (unless the account given by Asaph be admitted—this I have shown you related to the seventh sign); his evidence, then, goes to prove that the Israelites were not literally baptized either by the cloud or the sea—consequently, there was no cleansing accomplished by the sprinkling of rain. This will sufficiently answer

The SEVENTH WITNESS, and prove to you that the Israelites, having their children with them, when alluded to by Paul, is no figure of infant sprinkling.

The EIGHTH imagines, that "the same instrument was employed to keep the waters divided, as was employed to divide them;" and that consequently, as a matter of course, the Israelites "must have been sprinkled with the spray of the tossing waves." Thus he plainly implies that the Almighty had not the same power over the spray as he had over the body of the waters. Is it not strange that ignorant man will not allow him "who spake and it was done; who commanded and it stood fast,"* the merit of performing a complete miracle? Who but men like these could conceive of sprays flying from a wall of "congealed" water; or that the same mighty power which "made the waters stand as an heap,"† could not still the tossing waves? Yet this Witness, in his great wisdom, asserts that "here (in this clause) there is another incontestible evidence of scripture baptism without immersion." This "incontestible evidence," I grant, is of equal authority with all that the witnesses have brought forward in support of their cause; but, like every other part of it, it falls before the word of God, even as Dagon fell before the Ark.

The way in which the TENTH WITNESS speaks of this text is in my view impious. And having before called your attention to the manner in which he treats different passages, which he either does not, or pretends not to understand, I have only to request your attention to my former remarks.

Mark now, Gentlemen, the contradictory opinions of the Witnesses!

The FIRST says that they (the Israelites) were sprinkled or immersed by the cloud; he says nothing of the sea.

The SECOND, that they were sprinkled by the cloud, and seemed to be *buried* in the waters.

The EIGHTH, that they were affused by the cloud, and sprinkled by the sea.

The FIFTH, that, according to Asaph, the clouds poured forth water upon them.

If the evidence of these four witnesses be true, there is no reliance to be placed upon the testimony of the Almighty.

* Psa. xxxiii. 9.

† Psa. lxxviii. 13.

He said that "the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea, upon DRY GROUND." They say that the sprays from the sea, and the waters from the cloud, wet the Israelites; of course, the same sprays, and the same pouring down, would wet the earth, and consequently they did not go over on DRY ground.

The next passage to which I shall call your attention, is 1 Peter iii. 21: "The like figure whereunto, even baptism, doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God), by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." Upon this,

The FIRST WITNESS observed, that "Noah believed God, and obeyed him, in building the ark, and that God made it the means of his salvation from the deluge; that the waters of the flood would not have saved him, had he not made use of the ark; so the water saves no man, but as it is the means of getting his heart purified by the Holy Spirit. The ark was not immersed, but sprinkled with the rain that fell from heaven." And this he thinks conducive to the plaintiffs' claim, being, "from the circumstances, in favour of sprinkling." But he sees nothing in the text in behalf of immersion in baptism. It would have been as good sense if he had said, he sees nothing of immersion in immersion, or of baptism in baptism. The text was not intended to explain the import of the word baptize; but to show us, that the unbelievers of the former world were under condemnation, and that as Noah was saved by believing God, and manifesting his faith by building the ark, and entering into it as he was commanded, so the unbelieving world is now under condemnation, and there is no way of escape for any, but by repentance, and faith in the Son of God; that faith being avowed, by a public confession, in the ordinance of baptism. Hence the figure; as Noah was saved by believing and passing through the flood in the ark, so we shall be saved by believing and passing through the water in baptism.

The SECOND spake boldly and truly: he informed you "that as all that were without the ark perished, and all within the ark were saved, so all that are ingrafted into

Christ by faith, whereof baptism is a seal, are saved, whilst the *unbelieving* and *unbaptized* part of the world perish." And he exhorted you to learn by this, that "OUTWARD baptism ALONE saved NONE, but the inward only;—that the sign and singular effect of inward baptism, is the answer of a good conscience towards God." Now, Gentlemen, mark his wavering and inconsistency! "We must not," he tells you, "conclude with the Anabaptists, from this text, that baptism can be of no saving advantage to infants, because they cannot at present make this answer of a good conscience." Did he not so conclude it, when he stated that outward baptism alone saved none? Those who understand the Scriptures do not argue (as alluded to by this witness) that because an infant Jew had not the inward circumcision, he ought not to have been admitted to the outward. The Jewish church was a worldly sanctuary; circumcision entitled the individuals to all its benefits, and their temporal rights were held under this proviso; for unless they had the sign of circumcision in the flesh, they were to be cut off from the people of God. But at the present day a child has nothing depending on his being christened; on the contrary, ninety-nine times at least in a hundred it is injurious, for it begets an impression on the mind (though of an indefinite nature) that some privilege is thereby conferred, and this, remaining to the end of his life, in a manner renders the man indifferent to his real interests. The defendants therefore dare, and do, assert, that the answer of a good conscience is ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY, and EXPRESSLY REQUIRED; and that without it baptism is a MOCKERY. Every Jewish male was commanded by God to be circumcised: but baptism, as I before observed, is a different ordinance. The Testator does not require infants to be baptized. (Christening a child is required by man only: in this he usurps the prerogative of Christ, and would induce you to believe, though he dare not positively assert it, that without his helping hand, the child would be lost.) But he does require believers to confess their faith in baptism; and I cannot think it possible that any man can receive the Gospel and reject this ordinance.

The FOURTH says that "Christ is the true ark. His church is within the ark, and therefore safe. Into this ark men enter by faith; this faith Jews and Gentiles professed, when by baptism they were admitted into the Christian Church; and thus the baptismal water formed as it were the sign of their safety. It was not (he further adds) the mere outward administration of baptism which could effect this, unless it were also *rightly received*. It was, therefore, 'the answer of a good conscience towards God,' which saved;" and having so said, he asserts that "the argument concerning the baptism of infants born of Christian parents is not at all affected by it." Here we are informed that it is through faith men enter into this ark; which faith both Jews and Gentiles professed in baptism. Yet this does not affect the argument for the sprinkling of those infants who are born of Christian parents. How are we to reconcile these contradictory statements? It is impossible that an infant can, by any means, or in any way, be the subject of faith; it is a folly, therefore, for the plaintiffs to put a difference between the children of men, whether born of believers or unbelievers. According to—

The SEVENTH, "Peter's language implies, that being saved by water in the ark was a figure, and expresses that being saved by baptism is a corresponding figure."

The EIGHTH, "The circumstance or state of those in the ark is said to be a figure or resemblance of Christian baptism; but they were not dipt into the water, and taken up again, but only had water poured down upon them."

'The ark of Noah, Gentlemen, is represented as a figure; and baptism is represented as another figure of the same thing; *i. e.* the salvation of God by Jesus Christ.' It is then by baptism that believers enter "the narrow way which leadeth unto life."* The ark and baptism being like figures, it follows, that as all were shut out of the ark who did not believe the preaching of Noah, so all will be shut out of the kingdom of heaven who do not believe the gospel.

* Matt. vii. 14.

The NINTH says, that "Noah building the ark, and entering into it with his family, are considered by St. Peter as the visible expression of his faith in the ancient promises of God respecting Messiah; and for this reason baptism is called by St. Peter, without any allegory at all, but in the sobriety of fact, the antitype of this transaction; the one exactly answering the other, as an external expression of faith in the same objects and the same promises." This is plain language, Gentlemen, by which the Witness not only acknowledges that the Apostle Peter in this figure has a direct allusion to baptism, but that baptism necessarily implies an accompanying expression of faith in the same object and the same promises—hereby showing, as we maintain, that faith, confession, and baptism are so compacted as to be inseparable.

Gentlemen, you have heard a great deal said by the Witnesses upon the two following clauses: "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."* "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him, through the faith of the operation of God:"† and you will naturally wonder what these passages have to do with the christening of a child; seeing that they speak of baptism as an act of faith—a dying unto sin. Infants cannot believe, neither can they die unto that in which they never lived; consequently these texts can have no allusion to them.

Our opponents show their enmity to Christ by putting captious questions; thus we are asked why we do not go forward to the 5th and 6th verses of the 6th of Romans, and show a resemblance, not only between *baptism* by *immersion* and being buried with Christ, but also between immersion and being planted with Christ; and how baptism resembles the nailing of a body to the cross.‡ These questions, Gentlemen, come with a bad grace from those who

* Rom. vi. 3, 4.

† Col. ii. 12.

‡ Ninth Witness.

have not even attempted to show, by way of strengthening their own cause, that sprinkling bears a resemblance to any of them; nevertheless, I shall respond to their call.

Believers being literally baptized in water into Jesus Christ, are figuratively baptized into his death. "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead—even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death," namely, 'by dying unto sin: if, as Christ died, we die; he a natural death, we a figurative one; he for sin, and we to sin; he by way of expiation, suffering, and making satisfaction for sin,' we by self-denial and refraining from sin; we are planted by baptism "in the likeness of his resurrection," and "*grow* in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."* 'We experience the power of Christ's death and resurrection, by enabling us to die to sin and live unto God, only by virtue of a REAL IMPLANTATION into Christ by an operative and lively faith;' whereby we become "like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season;"† And by subduing our corrupt desires, our old man is crucified with him. Paul says, "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."‡ In this passage Paul implies, that as the Lord was crucified for him upon the cross, so he is figuratively crucified unto the world, and the world unto him. An expression similar to that of being baptized into his death, and thus in measure being set free, as he who is dead is freed from sin. It may be said of Paul, that he lived a life of perpetuated crucifixion, being continually persecuted by the professedly *pious* and *devout*,—they who paid tithes of mint, and anise, and cummin: and if he were now living among us, the same description of characters would still persecute him, so far as their power of annoyance extended.

Some of the Witnesses told you, that the "immersion of a body under water, and its emersion from it, bear but a very

* 2 Pet. iii. 18.

† Ps. i. 3.

‡ Gal. vi. 14.

indistinct resemblance to the death of Christ :” that “ excepting washing and anointing was a part of the same process, there is no point of resemblance between the burial of Christ and our baptism :” and that, “ though immersion might put forth a clumsy type of burial and rising again, it is wanting in not being emblematical of death.” Now what in nature can be more emblematical of death ? for if the body be kept under water only for a few minutes, life would be extinct, so that it would cease to be a figure by becoming a reality—a more striking emblem of death therefore could not be devised : and rising again out of the water, represents, in the same striking manner, a resurrection to new life. This is according to the view that the apostle takes of it ; “ We are buried with him by baptism into death ; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” How then can it be said of this ordinance, thus represented by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, that it is a “ *clumsy* type of a burial and resurrection ” ?

I shall now run over the evidence upon the two clauses given by each of the Witnesses, and show their equivocations and contradictions.

The FIRST is very fearful of committing the plaintiffs. He tells you that “ it is probable that the apostle here alludes to the mode of administering baptism by immersion—that it is possible that the apostle here alludes to this mode, but it is not absolutely certain.”

We may be sure, Gentlemen, that when a man is resolved to repress his convictions, he will never arrive at an absolute certainty on a subject which he hates. Observe now his remarks upon 1 Cor. xv. 29. Here he says, as “ they receive baptism as an *emblem of death*, in VOLUNTARILY GOING UNDER THE WATER, so they receive it as an *emblem of resurrection unto eternal life*, in COMING UP OUT OF THE WATER.” Upon the meaning of this text we have no probabilities ; we may therefore conclude that he has come to something like certainty. And as the apostle uses the like expression in the same sense in both places, we may rest assured, that if this

Witness were free from prejudice, he would not have said upon the former texts, that it was POSSIBLE, or that it was PROBABLE, but that it was ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN.

The SECOND informs you, that “We are *incorporated*, ingrafted, implanted into his church by baptism; that by baptism we are made visible members of it; and that we are baptized into Christ’s death, by dying unto sin, as Christ died for sin. That there is not a doubt but that the apostle alludes to putting persons UNDER WATER, and raising them again OUT OF THE WATER, which mystically signifies the burying of the old man sin, and our resurrection to newness of life; and that believers are to imitate his death by their dying daily to sin.” Mark, Gentlemen, it is believers who are to imitate his death by baptism! not infants, by being sprinkled. Yet observe how he afterwards contradicts himself! “Baptism (the same baptism just now spoken of), under the New Testament, succeeds circumcision under the Old, and is a rite of initiation to Christians, as circumcision was to the Jews; therefore baptism is undoubtedly Christ’s ordinance for infants of believing Christians, as circumcision was of old for the infants of believing Jews.”

How the same person can hold opinions on the same subject so much at variance with each other, I am unable to explain; to me there appears a perfect incongruity; and the mind must be strangely constituted that can maintain such opposite views, as “that believers are to imitate his (Christ’s) death, by dying unto sin,” and that “therefore baptism is undoubtedly Christ’s ordinance for the infants of believing Christians.”

The THIRD means (I presume) to imply that we are figuratively buried with him, by being literally put under water; and that, by being raised up out of it, we are born to newness of life.

The FOURTH says, that “great stress has been laid upon the expression, ‘buried with him by baptism into death;’ as proving that baptism ought to be performed by immersion, to which the apostle is supposed to allude. But we are said also to be ‘crucified with Christ,’ and circumcised with him,

without any allusion to the outward manner in which crucifixion and circumcision were performed: and as baptism is far more frequently mentioned with reference to the 'pouring out' of the Holy Ghost—and as the apostle is evidently treating on the inward meaning, not the outward form, of that ordinance—no conclusive argument is deducible from the expression, showing that immersion is necessary to baptism, or even, apart from other proof, that baptism was generally thus administered.

"Instead of the outward sign of circumcision, baptism had been substituted; which some suppose to be meant by the 'circumcision of Christ:' this represented that death and burial with him from former confidences, and sinful and worldly pursuits. The baptism of Jews and Gentiles, when converted to Christianity, implied their death 'unto sin and new birth unto righteousness.' The same inward change had been signified by circumcision, which was administered to adult proselytes, and then to their infant offspring: so that no argument here can be adduced against the baptism of infants."

The apostle is unquestionably treating of the inward meaning or spiritual design of the ordinance, as figurative of the death and resurrection of Christ; and believers dying to sin, and rising through faith to newness of life: this is most significantly set forth by the body being put under, and again raised out of water; which the apostle terms being buried with him by baptism unto death, and raised with him to newness of life. The expressions "buried in baptism," and "raised to newness of life," undoubtedly have allusion to baptism as administered to believers, and to none besides; otherwise the words would be wholly without meaning. The attempt of this witness to defeat the import of these expressions relative to baptism, by drawing a comparison between the allusion made by the apostle to crucifixion, in which no mention is made of the manner whereby that punishment was inflicted, completely fails, there being no parallelism on the two cases. Baptism was a figurative ordinance, a type of a spiritual operation on the soul—cruci-

fixion was a capital punishment, inflicted by an executioner, for the destruction of natural life : no allusion, therefore, is made to the manner of execution, but to its consequences. And as the Lord Jesus was actually put to death on the cross, so his people are said to be crucified with him (figuratively), when the body of sin is destroyed—when, through grace, they are delivered from the service of sin, by dying thereto, and living unto God. With regard to circumcision, which this witness introduces in connexion with crucifixion, does the omission of the mode in which that rite was performed necessarily imply that the terms used by the apostle, significative of the administration of baptism, have no meaning, but are merely expletives? If so, there is an end to the argument: for, upon the same principle, no fact can be established, however well attested, and seen by thousands of people, all bearing testimony to it, if some one historian living at the time omits the mention of it. In this way, infidels frequently assail many of the facts recorded in the Scriptures; and to this way our opponents frequently resort.

The SIXTH says, “this resemblance, on which so much stress is laid by our *brethren*, has always appeared to me but a far-fetched fancy. I shall say nothing stronger, lest I should possibly be in the *wrong* so considering it.” And, further, that “as it was necessary, in order to Christ’s rising, that he should be laid in the grave, so in the figure, it is necessary that we should be viewed as buried with him, in order to our rising with him to newness of life. Now (says he) it is quite obvious, that the argument of the apostle has not the remotest connexion with the mode of baptism.” As this witness has some compunction of conscience, occasioned by the lightness of manner with which he treats this subject, we will leave him to the operation of his convictions, which may, perhaps, produce a salutary effect: and as, in our comments upon the evidence of the preceding witness, we have shown that the words in question have an important and distinctive meaning, it is needless to repeat them here.

The SEVENTH informed you, that “to many, these texts present no difficulty. They have been accustomed to think

baptism and immersion to be synonymous terms." We agree with those who think the terms are synonymous, though the simple act may in one case be a mere nonentity, and in another valid baptism. An unbeliever may be immersed, but, not being a proper subject for baptism, he cannot, in the scriptural signification of the term, be said to be baptized. But when a believer is so baptized, he is inducted into **THE CHURCH**, and becomes a genuine follower and disciple of Christ. Strictly speaking, according to the true import of the word, only a believer can be said to be baptized. Witness what Paul said, on finding certain people, whom he supposed to be disciples, because they had been immersed; "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" They answered, "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost"—thus showing that they were unacquainted with the import of the ordinance, and that they had been immersed by some ignorant or false teacher. But after they had been taught of Paul they were **BAPTIZED**—and the Holy Ghost came on them.* Does not this prove that, though these people had been previously baptized, their baptism was a nullity? This witness speaks upon the clauses before us in a modest and becoming manner; thus, "All allusions of Scripture are admirably correct, and whenever we meet with any which seem to be exceptions from this character, we have much reason to suspect that the difficulty is owing to our own inattention and ignorance." Paul's allusion is very plain; he says, "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin (having been figuratively buried with him by baptism unto death), live any longer therein?"

The **EIGHTH** tells you, "the apostle is not speaking concerning the external and ceremonial part of Christian baptism, but concerning the internal and moral part: not concerning the application of water, which has no power to kill or destroy the body of sin, but concerning the regenerating influences of the Spirit, by which Spirit the Scriptures often speak of Christians as baptized."

* Acts xix. 1—6.

The apostle is here speaking of literal baptism, baptism in water, as figurative of the death and burial of Christ, not the baptism of the Holy Ghost; and no one who reads the Will for instruction can mistake the one for the other. This witness appears to grant that the two texts, Rom. vi. 3, 4, and Col. ii. 12, "favour the mode of dipping;" but in making this admission, he wishes the defendants to allow that the several texts he has mentioned equally favour sprinkling or pouring. Thus he is wishful to compromise, and makes the overture, by saying, "If any still think it their indispensable duty to baptize by immersion only, let them, by all means, thus baptize; but then we *beseech* them to forbear all severe censures of those who are not dipt." We do not hold any opinions upon this subject but such as we obtain from the plain testimony of the word of God; neither do we use any harsh terms but such as are derived from the same source. If that word condemns all who depart from its plain and positive precepts, how dare we harbour the idea that the Lord will hold those guiltless who disregard his injunctions, when he declares that he will "remember their iniquity and visit their sins."*

The NINTH asks, "How can the apostle speak of baptism as an emblem of Christ's burial, when he argues from it as the instrument of our death unto sin, and a separation from it, by a mystical burial?"

Gentlemen, the apostle says, that when a believer is baptized, he thereby figuratively shows that he is dead to sin, is buried with Christ, and is risen again to newness of life. But this witness says that "the baptism here made use of is not an emblem of our SPIRITUAL death, burial, and resurrection." For "as an emblem, even immersion, though it might put forth a *clumsy* type of burial and rising again, is wanting in not being emblematical of death." The believer dies a *temporal* death only; he rises again to *eternal* life. But it is for the unbeliever to die a second, as well as a temporal death,—for the man who, by "turning of things upside down,"† perverts the gospel of Christ. What does he mean

* Jer. xiv. 10.

† Isa. xxix. 16.

by baptism not being an "emblem of spiritual death"? There is no such thing as spiritual death: a man born of the Spirit "lives for ever."* Baptism is an emblem of the death of the old man; and rising again out of the water is an emblem of spiritual life in the new.

The Tenth turns the commission of the Testator into ridicule, and treats the subject in a manner little short of profanation; so that I am at a loss for terms sufficiently reprehensible of such conduct. I shall therefore take the advice which Solomon gives me; "Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him."†

Eight of the Witnesses either assert or imply that there is no salvation without baptism; yet, instead of inculcating the divine command, they, as well as the remaining two, pawn upon their followers a spurious rite, attaching to it a counterfeit requirement, in the place of, and in opposition to, the ordinance of the Testator, the observance of which he requires of those only "that believe to the saving of the soul." I shall therefore address the people of this day, in words that were spoken of old, for they are perfectly applicable to the present times; "O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths."‡

I have now, according to my notes, commented upon all the New Testament passages which are brought forward by the Witnesses to prove that children are proper subjects of baptism; and I trust that I have not only satisfied you that they are inapplicable to their purpose, but that they have left the plaintiff's claim just as they found it, *i. e.* unsubstantiated. Indeed, they do not pretend to show that infants can receive any benefit from being christened, but upon the supposition that they come into the world in a state of condemnation, guilty creatures, deserving of God's wrath; and that they remove this guilt, and make them new creatures, by a rite invented by men like themselves.

We are next told, in triumphant language, by the Sixth and Eighth Witnesses, that "there is not the remotest allu-

* John vi. 51.

† Prov. xxvi. 4.

‡ Isa. iii. 12.

sion, in the form of direction, or of warning, to the reception of such children by baptism into the Christian church, upon their professing their faith in which they have been brought up." That there is "not in the whole Scripture one instance of such practice, no, nor any shadow or appearance of it." "Our Baptist *brethren*," says the Sixth, "would do something more to the purpose, if they could produce one or two examples of the baptism of such adults as those mentioned." And the Fourth says, "that the consideration that we do not read in the New Testament of one single instance in which the children of Christian parents were baptized adult, strongly countenances the practice of pædobaptists."

This is another instance, Gentlemen, of their petty subterfuges. What says the Testator? "Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them." Baptizing whom? Those unquestionably that are taught. This command determines who are, and who are not, to be baptized. The Will takes no cognizance of the children of believers, any more than of those of unbelievers; neither do many of the Witnesses. Peter expressly declares, that God put no difference between the Jews and the Gentiles;* and the whole bearing of the Will irrefragably proves that none can be scripturally baptized but those whose hearts have been previously purified by faith. It is not said, in so many words, that Timothy was baptized; but we have presumptive proof, amply sufficient to satisfy the most upright jury that ever was empanelled, that he confessed his Lord in the ordinance of baptism. He had the gift of God by the putting on of Paul's hands; and we know that the practice of this ordinance was subsequent to baptism.† We know also that the Testator was baptized when about thirty years old, and before he entered upon his ministry; consequently no one can be duly commissioned to preach his gospel until he has followed his example. Timothy was a minister, and therefore must have been baptized; and not only baptized, but ordained; as he was, by the "laying on of the hands of the presbytery."‡ Besides, Paul gives him the following charge, "Fight the good fight of

* Acts xv. 9.

† See Acts viii. 17; and xix. 6.

‡ 1 Tim. iv. 14.

faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.”* Now, all who are familiar with the Will must know, that no one but a baptized believer can fight the fight of faith, or lay hold on eternal life;—no one but he who commences that profession by manifesting his regards for the institutions of the Lord’s house, and following him in the way of his commandments;—no one but he who proves the sincerity of his love by walking “worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work;” † and who not only does not compromise, but who stands firm in defence of, the faith; “holding fast the form of sound words.”

Now we will suppose that it had been written thus—“And Timothy was baptized, notwithstanding the unfeigned faith which was in him, which dwelt first in his grandmother Lois, and his mother Eunice.” What would be the consequence? Would not these Witnesses turn round and say, As this is the only instance mentioned, it must have been a singular and rare case, and therefore not intended as a precedent for us to follow? Of this we have an example in the Tenth, who will not believe that the numerous baptisms which took place after the ascension of the Lord were administered in rivers or pools, because he reads of no other coming up from any water except the Eunuch; for which reason he says, “this last shadow of proof evanishes like the morning cloud and the early dew.”

But I shall here demand of the plaintiffs and their witnesses, and challenge them to show, that any believer in Christ ever brought his children to be baptized, or that the apostles ever baptized an infant of any description; for on them the onus of proof lies. It is true the Eighth Witness does venture to bring forward, though in a very modest manner, ONE case,—which we may be very certain he believes to be the ONLY one that holds out even the shadow of a shade of what he wishes to establish,—that of Lydia; which instance, says he, “strongly favours our practice.” Mark, Gentlemen! he only pretends to produce one instance, and

* 1 Tim. vi. 12.

† Col. i. 10.

this one, even in his estimation, only **STRONGLY FAVOURS**, it does not at all prove, the point at issue. And indeed how can it; when there "is nothing of the kind to be found,"—nothing in the "form," either of "fact," or "allusion," or "advice," or "precept;" nothing relating more to her children than to her husband; and nothing whatever indicating that she had either husband or child? And yet, Gentlemen, is it not astonishing, as being at variance with common sense, that these witnesses will take this solitary case as a precedent for christening infants (or rather as a cloak for the practice); and reject the clear and simple commission of the Testator, which commands them to baptize believers? For the latter they have a positive precept, which is undeniable, and examples to follow, described in language so plain, that no one who is wishful to understand them can possibly err. For the former, they have only a forced and constrained sense put upon a single passage of Scripture, which at the best amounts to no more than a mere negative in their favour. But this is a proof that the rite of christening was first established, and afterwards texts were sought out to give it a fair external appearance—or rather a text, for upon this one they chiefly rely. Thence the Eighth Witness tells you that the instance of Lydia **STRONGLY FAVOURS THEIR PRACTICE**. And the Ninth, that there is a circumstance **STRONGLY CONFIRMATORY OF THE PROBABILITY** that the house of Lydia contained children. But, Gentlemen, what says the First Witness? Why this, "that Lydia believed the things spoken by Paul, and received them as the doctrines of God; that in this faith she was **JOINED** by her **WHOLE** family; and that **IN IT** they were **ALL** baptized!"

I shall here make a few remarks on the reasons assigned for, and the supposed utility of, christening infants.

The **FIRST WITNESS** spoke so little in favour of his own doctrines, that he ought not to call those "heathenish and barbarous," who do not follow his plan: neither ought he to accuse them of "unaccountable bigotry" for withholding from their infants nothing more than what he himself calls "the privilege of a **NOMINAL** dedication:" the utility of which

according to his own showing, is very questionable : for all he says in its praise is, " that no soul can prove they cannot be benefited " thereby. Whatsoever (in relation to the things of God) is not of faith, is sin. It is therefore incumbent upon all who practise the rite of infant sprinkling to show that it is commanded by God.

The SECOND is not much more encouraging: all he promises to do is, to place the children of nominal Christians in the same situation as Jewish children were placed under the law ; but even this he will not undertake of himself, without the guarantee of three proxies.

The THIRD has confidence in his own creed. He tells us we are not naturally men without birth, so neither are we Christian men in the eye of the church but by new birth ; nor according to the manifest ordinary course of divine dispensation new born, but by *that baptism* which both *declareth* and *maketh* us *Christians*.

This Witness speaks with confidence, and expresses his opinion in plain language ; and this opinion corresponds with the doctrine taught by the church catechism, that by baptism, infants, from being children of wrath, are regenerated and made heirs of the kingdom of heaven. As we have before given our sentiments upon this subject, we shall not repeat them here.

The FOURTH cannot think there is much utility in christening infants, because he does not believe that, even if they die unchristened, they will be " shut out of heaven." Besides, he says, it is " not the privilege of the infant, but the duty of the parent is the grand thing to be ascertained." Consequently, however the parent may act, the child that dies in infancy cannot thereby suffer loss. This and the preceding Witness are ministers of the Establishment ; and have both sworn the same oaths, that they were moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon themselves the office of the ministry : yet one states that baptism transforms a child of hell into a child of heaven, thus plainly implying that an unbaptized child cannot be saved ; and the other, that such a

proposition is far more dreadful than any held by the most unfeeling Supra-lapsarian Calvinist.

The SEVENTH, that "there is unmixed joy at the baptism of an infant."

Whether the joy be unmixed or not, I cannot pretend to say; but where there are the means, there is generally a rejoicing on the occasion, often a revelling, and frequently a drinking to the NEW-MADE CHRISTIAN. In the report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons, christenings are placed very prominently among the remote causes of drunkenness.

The EIGHTH says that infants are most certainly in a state of condemnation, in consequence of the first sin, sentencing women to conceive and bring forth in sorrow; and afterwards states that they are to be baptized in consequence of being righteous. What a palpable contradiction is here! In the first place, they are declared to be in a state of condemnation; in the second, they are declared to be righteous, and by consequence fit subjects of baptism.

The NINTH tells you that "the child is interested in the believing act of the parents, as well as in the solemn engagement to bring it up in the nurture of the Lord."

Gentlemen, I am obliged to confess my want of capacity to comprehend the meaning of this sentence. Are we to understand by the expression, "the believing act of the parent," that by having his infant sprinkled, he believes that he thereby constitutes him a child of God? If this be what is meant, does his belief of it, or his doubt of it (which opinion I am informed is not very uncommon), affect the condition of the child in the sight of God? Will he reject or receive it on that account? And how, if it shall die in infancy, does the parent's solemn engagement affect its eternal state? As no opportunity has been afforded to put this engagement into execution, it can only be prospective of the child's arriving at maturity; and even then, this solemn engagement cannot be of advantage to it, unless it be strictly fulfilled, and the individual evinces a teachable disposition. We cannot see the necessity of a conscientious parent binding

himself by an oath to perform a duty incumbent upon him, whether he swears to perform it or not.

It will, perhaps, be expected that I should take some notice of the doctrine of Original Sin. I am not ashamed to confess myself ignorant of the meaning which is generally attached to the term. That we are considered as sinners so far as to subject us to the same death that Adam suffered for his first offence, I admit; but that we are treated as actual sinners, for personal violations of the law of God, on account of his sin, and shall hereafter suffer in consequence thereof, I do not believe. If I understand these Witnesses, they sprinkle infants, to cleanse them from "inherent sin;" and that they take for their precedent, and as a plea for their conduct in this respect, the Israelites, who under the old dispensation circumcised their male children. If this be the case, they act inconsistently; for when the rite of circumcision was instituted by God, he said, "I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed—and I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land of Canaan.—Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou and thy seed after thee.—This is my covenant:—Every man child amongst you shall be circumcised."* Is there any thing here whereby the most scrutinizing observer can realize the existence of native moral pollution, and say that original sin was the cause of the rite being instituted? But suppose it were admitted that this was the cause (though I do not admit it), what was to remove the original sin from those who died under the age of eight days? It would be incompatible with the justice of God to condemn them, when it was contrary to his law to circumcise them before that time: therefore, unless it can be proved that these perished in consequence of dying in their original sin, because they died uncircumcised, it cannot be proved that they who were circumcised were cleansed from it by their circumcision. But it would be still more incompatible with his justice to condemn female children for their original sin, when he had instituted no rite by which to cleanse them from it.

* Gen. xvii. 7—10.

The Jews entertained a false opinion, which became a proverb among them. But for this they were reprov'd by the Lord, who said, "What *mean ye* that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge? As I live, saith the Lord God, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel. Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die. But if a man be just, and do that which is lawful and right, and hath not eaten upon the mountains, neither hath lifted up his eyes to idols, &c.—hath walked in my statutes, and hath kept my judgments; he is just, he shall surely live, saith the Lord God. If he beget a son that is a robber, a shedder of blood, &c. and that doeth not any of those duties, &c.—shall he then live? he shall not live:—he shall surely die; his blood shall be upon him. Now, lo, if he beget a son, that seeth all his father's sins, which he hath done, and considereth, and doeth not such like—he shall *not* die for the *iniquity of his father*, he shall surely live. As for his father, because he cruelly oppressed, &c.—lo, even he shall die in his iniquity. Yet say ye, Why? doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father? When the son hath done that which was lawful and right, and hath kept all my statutes, and hath done them, he shall surely live. The soul that sinneth it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son."*

From these Scriptures, it is manifest that no man can come under condemnation through Adam's transgression; and it is equally manifest that every one stands in his own individual capacity in the sight of God, and is accountable only for his own sins. Therefore any rite founded upon the contrary supposition, as infant sprinkling professedly is, is worse than useless, and, as I have before observed, may be attended with the most fatal consequences.

The doctrine of original sin is, I believe, principally built upon the following passage; "I was shapen in iniquity, and

* Ezek. chap. xviii.

in sin did my mother conceive me." Of this the Eighth Witness gives a good explanation; he says it was "alluding to the bitter sorrows in which, in consequence of the first sin, the woman is sentenced to conceive and bring forth." There was no original sin in Adam and Eve, yet they fell in the same manner as all their progeny have fallen. The Testator "was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;"* "*like unto his brethren*;"† and "was in *all points* tempted like as *we are*, yet without sin."‡ But if, as these witnesses affirm, we come polluted into the world, the Testator must have come into it in the same state, (which is contrary to the testimony of the Scripture, which declares that he was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners,"§) or he could not have been made like unto us: both these testimonies cannot be true—their evidence must be false, or there is no Spirit of truth. It is said in the prophets, "*O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself*."|| This corresponds with what Solomon says, "*God hath made man upright*, but they have sought out many inventions."¶ And the same question may be asked now as in the days of Jeremiah; "Hath a nation changed their gods, which are yet no gods? but my people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit."***

He must be very credulous who supposes that children come into the world in a state of pollution, under condemnation for sin; and yet thinks that the judgment may be evaded, and the guilt removed, by merely sprinkling a few drops of water on their faces. A man who can seriously entertain such an idea must have a very mean opinion of the omnipotent, unchangeable Jehovah: "Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes."††

I shall now, Gentlemen, bring to your remembrance what has been advanced on the subject of Regeneration; a doctrine upon which the Witnesses are as much at variance as they are upon the other clauses of the Will.

The THIRD asserts, that all are regenerated to whom bap-

* Rom. i. 3. † Heb. ii. 17. ‡ Heb. iv. 15. § Heb. vii. 26. || Hos. xiii. 9.

¶ Eccles. vii. 29.

** Jer. ii. 11.

†† Ps. l. 21.

tism is rightly administered. But as his arguments are chiefly drawn from the Liturgy and the Articles of the Church of England, which are of no authority with us, we think it unnecessary to reply to them.

The FOURTH says, that "unless it can be proved that circumcision was not the sign or sacrament of regeneration, even as baptism now is, I cannot see how the argument can be answered: and all the common objections against infant baptism, as administered to subjects incapable of the professions required, and the benefits intended, bear with equal force against infant circumcision."

The Jews, as a body, declared themselves, in numerous instances, to be unbelievers. When they were about to enter the promised land, none of them above twenty years of age (with the exception of Moses, Aaron, Miriam, Caleb, and Joshua,) believed that the Lord was able to subdue the inhabitants, and give them quiet possession of it. And there was a time when Elijah thought that he was the only believer among them. This shows that their being circumcised was no sign of their being regenerated. And we have millions of living witnesses around us to prove, that what the plaintiffs call baptism is no sign of it. How can the objections against infant baptism bear with equal force against infant circumcision, when the latter was strictly commanded by God, under an awful denunciation; and the former, by implication, as strictly forbidden? Is it not said in the commission, TEACH all nations, baptizing them? But it is for him who affirms, and not for him who denies this, to prove that either circumcision was, or that baptism is, a sign of regeneration.

The FIFTH asserts, and asserts truly, that "In every point of view, the doctrine that baptism is regeneration, that it insures or proves that it is attended or followed by it, either regularly or commonly, is erroneous, unfounded, and unscriptural. So far (says he) is this from being the doctrine of the Scriptures, that according to them, adults can never offer themselves unless *already* regenerated. 'The answer of a good conscience' cannot be given by him who is not regenerated: and it is evident (says he) that *no person who is*

unregenerated can declare that he renounces Satan and believes in Christ;" that "God has nowhere promised that children shall be regenerated either in, or by, the administration of this ordinance; accordingly, a great multitude of the circumcised children of the Israelites, and of the baptized children of Christians, in every age and church, have plainly lived and died unregenerated." And yet he says, "God has required believing parents to dedicate their children to him in baptism."

Here the evidence of this Witness is diametrically opposed to that of the Third. Yet he says it is required by the Lord that believers should dedicate their children to him in baptism; though he does not make it appear in what manner the child is benefited by it. The evidence for this requirement not being produced, it is unnecessary to follow his statement any further.

It may be said to—

The SIXTH, "Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?"* If this Witness, contrary to the Will of the Testator, affuses a child, what does it matter if the ceremony be accompanied with FEWER ABSURDITIES than that of the sprinkling of the Episcopalians? And though he does not think with them that christening is regeneration, yet if he practises the rite on which the assertion is founded, is not his absurdity as unwarrantable as that of the Church of Rome, the communion which he styles anti-Christian? And is not his affusion a remnant of the superstitious practices of that church? The Episcopalians act consistently with themselves, though unscripturally. They show clearly, by requiring sponsors to believe for the child, that faith should precede baptism, and that all that do believe, and are baptized, are regenerated. They are not so unfeeling as to refuse a child that which they think a spiritual benefit, because its parents do not belong to that class of persons who make a particular profession of Christianity; on the contrary, they instruct the people to bring their infants without delay, lest

* Matt. vii. 3.

they should die unchristened, and by consequence leave the world unregenerated.

According to the SEVENTH, "the union of believers with Christ, which is signified by baptism, is regeneration."

An infant is not a believer, therefore it is not in spiritual union with Christ; and consequently there can be nothing signified by its affusion. But still it is as innocent as Adam was before his transgression, although exposed to the loss of its natural life through his disobedience.

And according to the EIGHTH, "infants cannot enter the kingdom of God, except they have been born again of the Spirit."

It is only through faith in the Son of God, that any soul can be created anew; therefore as infants are incapable of being thus newly created, they cannot by any possibility be regenerated. Baptism is not a token of regeneration, for thousands of unregenerate persons may have been baptized, yet none can be acknowledged as regenerate, so long as they neglect to confess their Lord, by being baptized in his name.

Now, Gentlemen, you will be pleased to recollect, that

The NINTH WITNESS enumerated the several blessings that christening conveys to infants, by which, IF they die without sin, they are ACTUALLY regenerated. By this it is implied that if they live to commit sin they become unregenerate; the new life becomes extinct, and the secret spiritual influences which they are said to have received, become fainter and fainter, as they increase in years, until at length they disappear altogether. Thus the imaginary advantage which infants are said to derive from their christening appears, by the Witness's own account, to benefit the child only so long as it remains irresponsible for its actions.

It is unnecessary for me to comment at large on the discordant views which these Witnesses take of the ordinance of baptism. One says all are actually regenerated thereby. Another, that it is only a sign of regeneration. Another, that it neither insures nor proves regeneration. Another, that it is a practical testimony of the necessity of regeneration. Another makes it the appointed token or emblem of the re-

generating Spirit. And another says that it secures the gift of the Holy Spirit, for the regeneration of such as die in infancy. Which of these opinions, among such a variety, are we to adopt? Our opponents are so much divided upon this fundamental point, whereon all the importance of the ordinance depends, that we cannot have any regard for a superstructure erected upon a base composed of such heterogeneous elements, elements absolutely destructive of each other, and must therefore crumble into dust. My object in this place being merely to show the discrepancy of the evidence of my opponents' witnesses, I shall not further discuss the merits or demerits of their individual opinions.

Having now, to the best of my recollection, commented upon the evidence on each text upon which more than one of the Witnesses have spoken, I shall next briefly run over their evidence separately, not so much to comment upon it, as to point out how each, in numerous instances, has contradicted himself: thus showing the waverings, prevarications, and evasions by which they have endeavoured to divert your minds, and perplex your understandings. I shall select from my notes their principal incongruities, which being brought fresh to your recollection, their inconsistencies will thereby become more manifest.

The FIRST says, that "persons who are entrusted with the public ministry of the word, should take care that they teach not *human creeds*, and *confessions of faith*, in place of the sacred writings; but those things, and those only, which Jesus has commanded. Where the four Gospels and the Apostolic Epistles are at hand, EVERY THING relative to the salvation of the soul may be clearly apprehended by ANY SIMPLE UPRIGHT PERSON.

"It was John's business (says he) to proclaim the Gospel of the grace of God. They (the inhabitants of Judea) were to repent and be baptized, in reference to the remission of sins. Repentance prepared the soul for it, and baptism was the type or pledge of it. The baptism of John was by plunging the body, as seems to appear from those things which are related of him, viz. that he *baptized in Jordan*,

that he baptized in Ænon *because there was much water there*, and that Christ being baptized *came up out of the water*. To which that seems to be a parallel, Philip and the eunuch *went down into the water*, &c. As they (the followers of the Lord) receive baptism as an *emblem* of death, in VOLUNTARILY GOING UNDER THE WATER, so they receive it as the *emblem* of resurrection unto eternal life, in COMING UP OUT OF THE WATER." Here he asserts that faith necessarily precedes baptism, and that John's baptism was a plunging of the body—a voluntary going under the water.

Mark, now, Gentlemen, how soon this plain, clear, upright, and confident declaration is changed for confused, obscure, equivocal, and doubtful language! "It is PROBABLE that this rite was thus performed in Ænon—that the eunuch PROBABLY plunged himself—that, it is PROBABLE that the apostle (speaking of being buried by baptism unto death) alludes to this mode of immersion, but it is not ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN—which is the best mode of administering the sign, whether sprinkling, washing, or plunging, is EXCEEDINGLY DUBIOUS." Would any one, who should meet by accident with these two paragraphs separately, imagine that they proceeded from the same individual?

"Baptism (says he) implies a consecration and dedication of the soul and body to God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Whatever is solemnly consecrated to God abides under his protection and blessing." Christening, which, according to this Witness, is another term for consecration, is general in this country; therefore as the great mass of the people are thus dedicated to God, they are under his peculiar care and blessing. That all his creatures, among whom are the individuals here spoken of, are under his providential care, there cannot be any doubt, for "he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good." But the lives and conversation of the great body of the people give us no reason to conclude that they are "the blessed of the Lord;" for they openly declare, if not in words, at least by actions, that they "desire not the knowledge of his ways:" therefore his proposition cannot be admitted, being unsupported by proof.

“How many masters (he asks) are there still in Israel who are in this respect (with the nature of baptism with water, as an emblem of new birth—and with the cause, necessity, and effects of that new birth) *deplorably ignorant*; and, strange to tell, publish their ignorance and folly in the sight of the sun, by writing and speaking against the thing itself! *It is strange that such people cannot keep their own counsel.*” Is he not, Gentlemen, in this instance, pourtraying his own character?

“The Apostles (he says) must NECESSARILY UNDERSTAND that infants were included in the commission—it being said, Teach, make disciples of all nations—and THEN baptize them.

This deduction, Gentlemen, is no doubt so clear and manifest from the premises, that it cannot fail to strike the Court with irresistible force, especially when it is considered how peculiarly the capacity of infants is suited for the comprehension of doctrines so sublime.

Again, he says “It is natural to suppose that adults were the first subjects of baptism—and as to the objection that the baptized were obliged to profess their faith, and that therefore only adults should be baptized, there is no weight at all in it, because what is spoken of such refers to those who only at that period of life heard the Gospel, and were not born of parents who had *been Christians*. And yet (mark the contradiction, Gentlemen,) he says, “that having Abraham and Sarah for their parents, could not entitle them to the blessings of the new covenant, as no man could lay claim to them, but in consequence of being born of God; therefore (says he) neither *the will of the flesh*, any thing that the corrupt heart of man could perform or determine in its own behalf; nor the will of man, any thing that *another* may be disposed to do in our behalf, CAN AVAIL HERE.”

And again, Gentlemen, mark, “There is no place for John’s baptism among us, WHO ARE BORN CHRISTIANS:” yet, says he, “Those that have never had any other baptism than that of water, may take Jesus Christ’s word for it, that they cannot enter into the kingdom of God: it is Jesus only who baptizes with the Holy Ghost: he who receives not this

baptism, has neither right nor title to the kingdom of God, nor can he, with any propriety, BE TERMED A CHRISTIAN. *To be a Christian, a man must be baptized in the Christian faith."*

In the first place, he says that we are *born* Christians ; in the second, that no man can be *called* a Christian who is not baptized with the Holy Ghost. Can these two declarations be reconciled with each other ?

Lastly, he says, " Under the dispensations of the Gospel, *neither circumcision*—nothing that the Jews can boast of, nothing that the Gentile can *call excellent, availeth any thing.*" Nothing " but a total renewal of the whole man — of all the powers and passions of the soul ; and as creation could not be effected but by the power of the Almighty, so this change cannot be effected but by the same energy : no circumcision can do this, only the power that made the man at first, *can new make him.* Thus, as a thorough conversion of the soul is compared to a new creation, and creation is the proper work of an Allwise, Almighty Being ; then this total change of heart, soul, and life, which takes place under the preaching of the Gospel, is effected by the power and grace of God—this is salvation."

We agree with this Witness, that no outward rite or ceremony can avail any thing to any soul, without this complete renewal of the heart, this new creation of the whole man. It must be clear to every rational being, that this cannot by any possibility take place in infancy, nor before the understanding is matured ; for it is through the enlightening of the mind by the Word and Spirit of God that the soul is renewed : " For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness ; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."*

"Baptism (he proceeds to say), to be '*essentially performed,*' must be administered by sprinkling, washing, or plunging, by or in water : the name of the Father, &c. being invoked at the time. Whoever has had this, has the essence of baptism, as far as it can be conferred by man : and it matters not at *what period of his life*, he has had it : it is a substan-

* Rom. x. 10.

tial baptism, and by it the person has been fully consecrated to the holy and blessed Trinity."

As the mode, the time, and the subject are matters of such little importance with this witness, so must also the character of the operator be—whether a son of Belial or a child of God. In fact, his character is of the least importance of the whole. At the time of its christening, the child is a mere passive instrument, a very automaton; therefore it is certainly of no consequence to it when, where, how, or by whom the rite is performed. But to assert that such a performance has all the essentials of the baptism established by our Lord and Saviour, is to pour contempt upon it, and thus insult him to his face.

The SECOND prefaced his evidence by saying, "I do not come before you to deny the lawfulness of baptizing by immersion," (*i. e.* of baptizing by baptism,) "nor to oppose the lawfulness of dipping in some cases; but I cannot assert the absolute and indispensable necessity of it in all cases."

Here, Gentlemen, he makes sprinkling the exception, and yet in every instance acts upon the exception as if it were the rule; though all he can advance in support of his practice is mere negative authority. His open declaration that he cannot assert immersion to be necessary in every case, is a tacit acknowledgment that it is necessary in *some*. Moreover, he says that "ALL those who would be accepted of God unto righteousness and life, must be such as DO BELIEVE in Christ with the heart, and openly CONFESS with the mouth that he is the Son of God." And you are well aware, Gentlemen, that that confession, to be available, must be made in baptism.

"The apostle Paul (says he), in Rom. vi. 4. alludes, *no doubt*, to the ancient manner and way of baptizing persons—which was by IMMERSION, OR PUTTING THEM UNDER WATER FOR A TIME, AND THEN RAISING THEM UP AGAIN OUT OF THE WATER: representing our resurrection to newness of life. After the Eunuch had been instructed, he desired baptism; his *qualification* was, *believing* with the *whole heart*. He *went down into the water*, and was baptized by Philip. Persons in that age were put UNDER the water when they were

baptized." Yet in the face of these, his admissions, he turns round and asserts, that "It is very IMPROBABLE that the jailer and his household were baptized by dipping—neither is it the LEAST PROBABLE that St. Paul himself was baptized by dipping." Here he states the qualification necessary for baptism, and that all the baptized were originally put under water; and in another place, that both the cloud and the sea had some resemblance to our being covered with water in baptism. But when he mentions particular instances of baptism, he says that it is *improbable* that the individuals were baptized according to the rule that he himself lays down.

"It is not to be wondered at (says he) that Christ did neither baptize infants nor command them to be baptized, when we consider that they had already entered into covenant with God by circumcision."

We have been repeatedly told that sprinkling occupies the place under the New Testament dispensation which circumcision occupied under the Old. And we are here informed that the Testator did not order infants to be baptized, because they had already entered into covenant with God by circumcision. Now, Gentlemen, we will take these Witnesses on their own ground, and show you the absurdity of their statements. There cannot be a question but that the law of circumcision was in force until the crucifixion of our Lord; and consequently that every believing Jew, who was baptized under his ministry, or under that of John, must have been the subject both of circumcision and baptism. Then, by a parity of reasoning, should not every sprinkled individual, upon arriving at mature age, and becoming a believer in the Gospel, be in like manner also baptized?

"John's baptism was (says he) the baptism of repentance, of which *infants were incapable*. Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples; this (says he) is called the baptism of repentance, of *which children were capable* subjects, because baptism doth not require children's repentance at present, but engages them to repentance for the time to come. The baptism of repentance belongs to children, though they know not what repentance means. The preaching of the doctrine

of repentance is absolutely necessary, in order to the preparing the hearts of sinners for the receiving Christ Jesus and his holy doctrine. Preaching must not only go BEFORE baptism, but follow after it. All adult and grown persons are to be first taught and instructed before they are baptized. But it follows not from hence that the children of such parents may not be baptized before they are taught. Men become not the children of God by natural propagation, but by spiritual regeneration. Religious parents propagate corruption, not regeneration. Baptism is *undoubtedly* Christ's ordinance for the infants of believing Christians. Men are so far from being God's children, because they had godly parents, that Christ told the Jews, who came forth out of Abraham's loins, *that they were of their father the devil.*"

Mark, Gentlemen, the contradictions and inconsistencies of this Witness. Children are incapable of John's baptism, but they are capable of our Lord's baptism! Yet he says they were both baptisms of repentance; and in another place, that "they were both the same for substance." Again, he says baptism is Christ's ordinance for the children of believers: yet he tells you they are no more God's children on that account, than were the natural descendants of Abraham, of whom Christ said they were of their father the devil; and in another place, that "since the coming of Christ, there is no difference or discrimination between one nation and another—no regard to any national privileges, either Jew or Gentile—no distinctions of conditions, either *bond* or *free*—but, circumcised or uncircumcised, we are all one as good as another, in respect of outer privileges." "Men (says he) are *most forward* to that service of God which is of man's finding out, and setting up; man likes it better to worship a God of his own making, than to worship the God that made him: and likes *any way* of worshipping, which is of his own *framing*, more than that which is of *God's appointing*. Ah, wretched heart of man (he exclaims), which, whilst it seems very zealous to worship and honour God, hath not zeal to do it in any other way than in that which reflects the *highest* dishonour upon him."

Gentlemen, I shall leave you to judge, from his testimony, if he be not one of those who, in thus judging others, condemns himself—for he that judgeth doeth the same thing.

The THIRD WITNESS asserts, that “God was pleased to *institute a new ceremony*, whereby mankind at large were to be admitted into covenant with him. For this purpose Christ ADOPTED baptism, which had been consecrated by his brethren after the flesh to a similar use. He kept the ceremony, says Bishop Taylor, that they who were led only by outward things might be the better called in, and easier enticed into the religion, when they entered by a ceremony which their nation always used in like cases; and therefore without change of the outward act, he put into it a new spirit.” Here he is at variance with himself, as well as with the bishop; for how can the adoption of an old established ceremony be called a ceremony newly instituted? Or how can the Witness say that “it was to this sacrament of baptism, the institution of which he was ANTICIPATING, that our Saviour alluded in John iii. 3—8, when according to the Witness’ own statement it had been instituted ages long before? But, even if this Witness were consistent with himself, as well as with the bishop, and the bishop’s reasoning were in accordance with the premises laid down, yet, inasmuch as his premises are defective, having no authority from the Will, all the reasoning built upon them, however specious, must be inconclusive.

This Witness further says, that “it is the doctrine of the Church of England, that by the *sacrament of baptism* we are *made Christians*; and that if the work of regeneration is not effected by baptism, it is almost impossible for any sober man to say when and by what means it is: and that we are thus left without any other guide, than the very questionable criterion of our own imaginations, or our own feelings, to determine whether we are in possession of that which our Saviour has pronounced to be an *indispensable requisite of salvation*. It is the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures that we are by BAPTISM made heirs of salvation through Christ.”

You could scarcely believe, Gentlemen, if you had not heard it yourselves, that a chaplain of the Archbishop of

Canterbury could utter such nonsense—that a man has no knowledge of his being regenerated but upon the doubtful evidence of a fellow creature, who informs him that he had been christened in his infancy; and that this is the only authority he can ever have, as proof of a spiritual operation in his own soul, upon which depends his eternal happiness or misery. Gentlemen, this is not the language of Scripture, and therefore shows that the Witness is not taught of God. The Lord says, “My people shall know my name—I am he that doth speak: behold it is I.”* Hear how John addressed believers in his day; “I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name’s sake. I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father.”† “He that believeth on the Son hath the witness in himself.”‡ “WE KNOW that we have passed from death unto life.” “And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.”§ “Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.”|| “Knowing, brethren beloved, (says Peter) your election of God.”¶ What, if Bishop Beveridge does prove that the opinions of the early Christians uniformly support the doctrine, it shews nothing more than that if *baptismal regeneration* be (as some affirm that it is) the Diana of the clergy of the present age, it was so in the time in which the bishop lived, and that he was one of her votaries.

Now, Gentlemen, note, by what follows, how he contradicts his former assertion; “It is (says he) an uncharitable, and a cruel insinuation—that our church knows of no distinction, but that between professed Christians and professed heathens, Jews, &c.: and that she really considers all, who are her nominal members, in such a sense in a state of salvation, as that they will escape future punishment, and obtain everlasting happiness, *whatever be their characters*. God

* Is. lii. 6. + 1 John ii. 12, 13. † 1 John v. 10. § 1 John iii. 14, 24.
 || 1 John iv. 13. ¶ 1 Thess. i. 4.

forbid (says he) that we should be justly exposed to so formidable an accusation! Let us rather trust, that whilst with the church we maintain the regenerating efficacy of baptism, to those who die before they commit actual sin,—that none who have arrived at maturity, and are capable subjects, are in such a sense Christians, as that they will obtain happiness and heaven, except those who are *influenced* by Christian principles, and exhibit a Christian conduct, who are PENITENT BELIEVERS, and habitual observers of God's laws."

If baptism be regeneration, it must be efficacious through every period of life, and not in infancy merely. Regeneration is being born of God, and whosoever is born of God overcometh the world. But we find there is no victory over the world but by faith; without it, the Scriptures uniformly declare no change can be wrought in the soul. Yet this Witness confers regeneration upon unconscious beings; and from the scope of his argument, it is evident that the efficacy of the regenerating principle, communicated at baptism, becomes weaker and weaker, as the powers of the mind are developed; and by the time the individual arrives at maturity, it is entirely evaporated. Can this be the regeneration that is spoken of in the Will? No, Gentlemen; you are aware that the regeneration, therein mentioned, is the life of God in the soul; and where it exists, it is a living principle, which can never become extinct; it is a "being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."* But though this Witness acknowledges that none are Christians but such as maintain a Christian conduct through life; yet he himself will, without distinction of character, repeat over the body of any deceased individual whom he may be called to inter, the following words: "Forasmuch as it hath pleased Almighty God of his great mercy to take UNTO HIMSELF the soul of OUR DEAR BROTHER; we therefore commit his body to the ground—IN SURE AND CERTAIN HOPE OF THE RESURRECTION TO ETERNAL LIFE."

But I may here be permitted to remark, that by some

* 1 Pet. i. 23.

clergymen this expression is qualified thus: "In these words there is not the *most remote* allusion to the particular lot of any individual, for we pretend not to decide upon the final state of any man. The words are not in sure and certain hope of his or her resurrection to eternal life, but of the resurrection of eternal life." This is a petty quibble, and carries deceit on the face of it. Have not the words a direct reference to the individual then and there interred, as the subject of the hope? and are not these express words for the consolation of the survivors, that they sorrow not, as it is said, "as others which have no hope?" But whoever makes this assertion is evidently ashamed of his profession, and invents this fable, for it is nothing better, to get out of a dilemma, and to gloss over the inconsistency of his own conduct, as well as that of the church to which he belongs. To me it is a matter of astonishment how any conscientious man will voluntarily place himself in such circumstances, as to be under the necessity of repeating such a form of religious service, which makes no distinction between those whom he may consider to have died in the faith, and the most profane and abandoned profligate; or even a professed infidel, who may have died, as there are instances on record, with blasphemy on his tongue.

"It is (says this Witness) a remark of a learned prelate (Bishop Randolph), to whom *many of us* are indebted for instruction in *sound* theology, that 'we are not told in Scripture to divide our hearers, being believers in Christianity in common, into classes of converted and unconverted. There is, indeed, a conversion from infidelity, or a conversion from sin, or course of sinning. But that, among men *baptized as Christians*, taught from their infancy to believe the doctrines and practise the duties of Christianity, a conversion also at some period of the life is necessary to stamp them true Christians, is an unheard of thing in the gospel, and is plainly a novel institution of man.' To contend, as is stated to be the opinion of our *self-denominated evangelical brethren*, by their apologist,* that in order to a state of salvation, a change

* Overton.

of mind, of views, and dispositions must be effected in *every person*, wherever born, however educated, or of whatever external conduct, is a conceit which revelation warrants not, and which *reason* and *experience* disclaim."

Is not the "Order for the Burial of the Dead" grafted upon such reasoning as Bishop Randolph's? Does he put any difference between the dead who have been *baptized as Christians*? Is not his reasoning in accordance with the "Burial Service," which excepts only those "who *die unbaptized*," who have been "*excommunicated*," or have "*laid violent hands on themselves*?"

This Witness is very fearful lest you should not believe that "regeneration by baptism" is a dogma of the Church of England; and in order to *convince you that it is*, he makes the following quotations from her liturgy, interspersed with his own remarks:—

"We call upon thee for this infant, that he coming to thy holy baptism may receive *remission of his sins* by spiritual regeneration. *The passage needs no comment*. But when the child that has been privately baptized is admitted into the public congregation, a prayer is offered—not as in the former office that he may be born again, but that he, *being* born again, &c.—the congregation is required to give thanks that the child is by baptism regenerate. This great variety of expression, wherein the same doctrine is so repeatedly conveyed, proves (says he) to my mind most satisfactorily how tenacious the Church of England is of baptismal regeneration. This variety we trace still further exemplified in the ministration of baptism to such as are of riper years. Thus, instead of the Gospel from the 10th chapter of Mark, the passage selected is the conversation wherein Christ asserts to Nicodemus the necessity of the new birth. It must be enough barely to quote this passage; it would be an insult to any man's understanding to attempt to make it clearer. If a bare statement of this fact does not convince a man, nothing I am persuaded can convince him, that it is *by baptism*, in the judgment of the Church of England, that a man is born of water and of the Spirit. I proceed to show

(says he) by a still greater accumulation of proof, what her doctrine is:—After being baptized, the first religious duty in which the church requires a child to be engaged, is the learning of his catechism—the VERY FIRST THING that she teaches him is, that ‘In his baptism he WAS MADE a member of Christ,’ &c.; and being interrogated what is its inward and spiritual grace, he *is instructed* to answer, ‘a death unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness.’ Had it been the intention of the composers of the catechism, as, indeed, I doubt not that it was, to assert most unequivocally the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, how could it have been more directly asserted? plainer language cannot be found.

“The next religious office, in which the child is engaged, is the order of confirmation; wherein he ratifies and confirms the vows made for him by his sureties. The bishop, who presides at the office, is directed to pray,—‘who hast vouchsafed to *regenerate* these thy servants by water and the Holy Ghost.’ The assertion is plain and direct: the church affirms by the mouth of one of her *governors*, and she affirms it in the most solemn prayer—not with a view to blessings contingent—but with a view to *those* which at baptism they *actually* receive. In the collect for Christmas-day, the petition is exclusively for daily renovation: the notice of our regeneration, and of our adoption—retrospective, and as a grateful acknowledgment of a blessing ONCE conferred, and not to be *repeated*. In the articles of our church, *Christians* universally are designated by the appellation of those ‘who are baptized and born again.’—Such are the doctrines of our church with regard to regeneration.”

You observe, Gentlemen, how zealous this Witness is to convince us all, that “Baptismal Regeneration” is the only regeneration recognized by the Church of England. I shall not attempt to argue the point with him. I leave it to those of his own brotherhood who hold an opinion quite the contrary. They must settle the difference among themselves. But this much I will take upon myself to say, that if it is the doctrine of the Church of England (which I do not question), it is not the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures; for the former

asserts, that all the christened infants, all the confirmed of all ages, and all the christened in "riper years," are regenerated; whereas the latter says, by the apostle James, that "of his own will begat he us with the word of truth."*

Now mark how this great champion of episcopacy overthrows the whole system of the Church of England! He asserts that "ALMOST EVERY SOUL (against whose prejudices, pride, and corrupt passions, the gospel militated,) must have been converted from his errors, whether in principle or in practice; his heart must have been opened and softened, and rendered capable of receiving fresh and totally different impressions, before he could become a believer in the truth, or a performer of the duties of the gospel. Every man who now also is under the influence of similar prepossessions, must now also undergo a similar change. EVERY UNBELIEVER and EVERY SINNER, although MADE BY BAPTISM A MEMBER OF CHRIST AND A CHILD OF GOD, must be in a certain sense converted, if he would ULTIMATELY SUCCEED to his inheritance of the kingdom of heaven."

Let this assertion be compared with what he has previously said of regeneration, and say, Gentlemen, if they can be reconciled. But, independently of what he has before stated, the sentence just now adverted to contains assertions wholly incompatible with each other; and directly opposed to the Will, which declares that "Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."†

The evidence of the FOURTH WITNESS is conclusive for my clients. From the tenor of it, it is clear that he has no confidence in his own creed. He told you that at one time he was very uneasy "whether baptism should be administered to infants, or only to adults professing faith;" and that "he became even afraid of administering it, or the Lord's Supper." Under these circumstances then he ought to have refrained from both, "for whatsoever is not of faith, is sin."‡ He attempted to still his conscience, by saying to himself, "He that believeth shall not make haste." But this passage he

* James i. 18.

† 1 John iii. 9.

‡ Rom. xiv. 23.

misapplied; for not being, according to his own confession, a believer, the text did not apply to him. He ought to have made haste to "relinquish his station," because it required of him duties which he could not conscientiously perform. In not doing this, it is evident he was trying to serve two masters; he had a desire to leave the society in which he moved, and seek for instruction among those who, at the time, appeared to him better acquainted with the Will; but he continued where he was, stifling his conscience, and clinging to the system which his heart told him he ought to relinquish. Cleaving to the principles which he had advanced, in preference to following the requirements of the Will, it was not likely that he should "receive satisfaction from reading books on both sides of the question." These could only bewilder him. If he had applied himself solely to the study of the Scriptures, with the disposition therein recommended, he would have arrived at a satisfactory conclusion; and not have remained in the perplexing state of *doubt* and *uncertainty* which is so apparent from his testimony. This he professed to do, as he says that he laid "aside all controversial writings, and determined to seek satisfaction on this question, as he had done *on others*, by searching the Scriptures and prayer." But there can be little doubt that, upon this subject, at least, he deceived himself; for the sequel shows that the enquiry was made with a strong bias in favour of preconceived opinions, and not with that impartiality which the importance of the question demanded.

He did not seek to be convinced of his error, but to find something to confirm him in it. In this he was certain to succeed, though that it was not to his satisfaction he clearly evinces, when he says that he "came to a conclusion that the infant children of believers, and of all who make a credible profession of faith, are the proper subjects of baptism, and that he had never afterwards been much troubled about it." This monosyllable, *MUCH*, speaks volumes. It demonstrates, in the clearest manner, that he had still misgivings of mind—that, having found no authority for his conduct in

the Will, his mind was ill at ease. It is evident that his faith and practice were not founded upon an impregnable rock, which no storms could shake; and there can be no doubt in the mind of every thinking person, who has heard his evidence, that if he had come to the study of the question free and unprejudiced, the conclusion at which he would have arrived would have been the reverse of what he states it to have been. He would have said, "The antipædobaptists *are* right." He told you that "immersion was doubtless baptism;" how then can sprinkling be baptism, when the words have a distinct and separate meaning?

"I can (says he) confidently appeal to my heart-searching Judge that I have, as far as I know, written word for word what I supposed he would have me write, without *adding*, *altering*, or *keeping back*, the sense of any passage willingly, to serve any personal end, or party interest, from fear of incurring reproach, or opposition, or desire of conciliating the favour of any man, or set of men whatever; and that the mistakes which have been made were involuntary, the effects of ignorance and error, and not of design."

In addition to that part of his testimony which I have previously touched upon, I shall now, Gentlemen, bring again before you the following statements, which you have heard from his mouth, in the hope that I may be able to convince you that a great portion of his evidence does not accord with his solemn affirmation.

"They were baptized by him (John) in, or AT, the river Jordan. Immersion is doubtless baptism—but whether the rite was administered by immersion or not, is incapable of decisive proof." Has he not here, to suit his particular views, made an addition to the text, which, if he had been desirous of doing justice to himself, he ought to have left untouched?

"Baptism (says he) is—that profession of faith in Christ, which is REQUIRED OF ALL who embrace Christianity. But if men truly believe in Christ, profess openly faith in him, and partake of his sanctifying Spirit, they will doubtless be saved, even—should they fall into any mistake about the ex-

ternal mode of administering that ordinance: and if men believe and are baptized, it does not follow, from the order of the words in the text, that *baptism* is invalid because it was *previous* to believing." Gentlemen, does not this manifest design? Can this be the effect of ignorance?

"The words (says he) *perhaps* may more correctly be rendered, 'He that shall believe and be baptized.'" I do not see what material difference this rendering makes; but if he would speak openly, may we not presume that he would say the words might be rendered, "He that shall believe after he has been christened shall, without being baptized, be saved"?

He says that "faith is more expressly required to salvation than baptism." We readily admit that there is much more said of the former than of the latter; and that there are passages where salvation is said to be by faith, without any allusion to that ordinance. Nevertheless, in most of the discourses delivered by the apostles, we find that baptism is invariably connected with believing; that it is by them made essential to the profession of Christianity. And what saith the Lord? "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved." This is the great promise on which we found all our hopes—the promise which as expressly prescribes baptism, as it requires faith. And if baptism may be dispensed with, why, I will ask, was it ordained by the Testator, and enjoined upon his disciples? Let our opponents answer the question!

You will recollect, Gentlemen, that this Witness made no remark upon the passage, "John was baptizing in Ænon, because there was much water there." The reason is obvious; he knew much water was not required for sprinkling. Now mark! when he wishes to make you believe that the three thousand, on the day of Pentecost, were sprinkled, he says, "As so great a number were baptized on this occasion, and as they were not by the river Jordan, 'where there was much water,' but in the midst of a populous city, *it is at least highly probable*, that they were not baptized by immersion."

If this inference be legitimate, then the opposite one, that

John baptized in the river Jordan, is irrefragably established; much water being required for that purpose, the ordinance was consequently administered where it was to be found. But now, because it was administered in a situation where water it is *supposed* could not be easily obtained in sufficient quantity, the apostles, therefore, must of necessity use economy, and abstain from a lavish use of so scarce an article. Accordingly, he would have us believe that the apostles sprinkled the three thousand; which not only answered the same end as baptizing them, but prevented an unnecessary waste of water.

"The expression (says he), 'of such is the kingdom of heaven,' *seems* to mean that little children are admissible into the visible church of the New Testament dispensation." This is his testimony before the Court. But you, Gentlemen, who have read his 'Force of Truth,' know that in applying the words 'Suffer little children, &c.' to himself, he gives a different and more correct definition of them. "I was (he therein says) very far indeed from being a little child, sitting humbly and simply at the Lord's feet, to learn from him the very first rudiments of Divine knowledge; I had yet no abiding suspicion that all which I had heretofore accounted wisdom was foolishness, and must be unlearned and counted loss. In short, I gradually saw more and more my need of instruction, and was at length brought to consider myself a very novice in religious matters. Thus I began experimentally to perceive our Lord's meaning, when he says 'Except ye receive the kingdom of God as a little child, ye shall in nowise enter therein.' For though my proud heart was continually rebelling, and would fain build up again the former Babel of self-conceit, yet, I trust, I have from this time, in my settled judgment, aimed, and prayed to be enabled, to consider myself as a little child, who ought simply to sit at the Master's feet, to hear his words with profound submission, and wait his teaching with earnest desire and patient attention."

From this observation, it is evident, Gentlemen, that this Witness does not consider the Scripture phrase, "little children," as applicable to infants, or children young in years; for even after he himself had arrived at manhood, he found

that he had still to learn to become, in the scriptural acceptation of that term, a little child; hereby making it manifest that when he is free from prejudice, he can view the subject in its true light; but that when he has a point to establish, then every word and sentence has a constrained meaning forced upon it.

In regard to Christian confidence and consolation, this Witness remarked, that it had been said, referring to him, that "*deep thinkers* and highly gifted persons are *seldom* favoured with such joy and peace in believing as are experienced by common minds; that men must always pay the penalty annexed to preeminence above their fellows."

From the manner in which this is mentioned, we presume that this Witness expresses the actual state of his own mind, and that it is not to be supposed that he stands alone in this predicament, but that what is stated with reference to him, prevails generally among those with whom the observer is personally acquainted, those whom he knows by report, and with whose writings he may be conversant,—many of them, no doubt, celebrated for the profoundness of their understanding, the strength of their capacity, and the depth of their knowledge in the things of God. To many this may appear paradoxical, and excite an enquiry how such a state of things can exist; but I confess I was neither startled nor taken by surprise by such an extraordinary announcement. I do not deny that these individuals have studied the word of God, and thought deeply upon many of its doctrines; yet it is evident, from the tenor of their conversation and writings, that that they do not derive the consolation which the reception of that word imparts. Here now we have the explication of this seeming mystery—that there is a penalty attached to the deep study of it; and that men of enlarged minds must be content to pay this penalty—that is, to forego the consolations of a Christian, for the sake of standing higher in society than their fellows. Does not the remark verify the saying of our Lord, "No man can serve two masters?" With such men as these, every thing relative to the ways of God retrogrades—as they advance in years, they regress in spirituality—as their knowledge increases, so their con-

solation diminishes. An infant, by virtue of a rite of man's invention, is made a child of God, an heir of heaven, created anew in Christ Jesus to eternal life; but as he increases in years, and advances in wisdom and in stature, he recedes in the way of life—he pines away—the vivifying principle gradually decays, and after a little time becomes extinct. In like manner, in after years, when the word of God is received into a common mind, the consolations are bright and dazzling; but if the individual should be so unwise as to reflect deeply upon the subject, and to examine seriously the foundation of his faith, the light diminishes in proportion to the extent of his enquiry, and at length not a spark remains. Is not this granting a triumph to infidelity, by practically inferring that the word of God will not bear strict scrutiny and impartial examination, but that it fails in the most essential point—the giving a “knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins?”* And yet these individuals write in its defence, and in proof of its divine authority. But—

We do not so read the word—we read that “the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.”† We do not so learn Christ—we learn that he “was not yea and nay, but in him was yea.”‡ Wisdom says, “Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. For whoso findeth me, findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord.”§ Again, it is said, “Wisdom is the principal thing: therefore get wisdom.”|| And again, “Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasure; then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.”¶ The apostle Paul declares of himself, that he pursued this course—“I follow after (says he), if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.” And again, “I press toward the mark for the prize of the *high calling* of

* Luke i. 77. † Prov. iv. 18. ‡ 2 Cor. i. 19. § Prov. viii. 35.

|| Prov. iv. 7.

¶ Prov. ii. 3—5.

God in Christ Jesus.”* Does this bespeak the reflection of a common mind—a mind void of deep thought; possessed of no gift to elevate him above the *common rank*? Further, our Lord says, that “Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and *doeth them*, I will show you to whom he is like: he is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock.”† The foundation, then, being nothing less than Christ himself, the Rock of Ages, is stable; and the superstructure raised upon it, being composed of rich materials, such as gold, silver, and precious stones, obtained by deep searching in the mine of God’s Word—all dross, alloy, and impurity being separated from it by the “refiner’s fire,” the power of earth and hell united cannot shake it, nor affect it in any way; the building, being of God, “a house not made with hands,” stands impregnable for ever and ever.

Gentlemen, I must confess to you, that I was shocked when I heard this Witness make the following statement. “With a heart full of pride and wickedness—my life polluted with many unrepented, unforsaken sins—after having concealed my real sentiments under the mask of general expressions; after having subscribed articles directly contrary to what I believed; and after having blasphemously declared, in the presence of God and of the congregation, in the most solemn manner, sealing it with the Lord’s supper, that I judged myself to be ‘*inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take that office upon me*,’ not *knowing* or believing that there was an Holy Ghost—I was ordained a deacon.” Evidence, Gentlemen, from a source like this, is inadmissible; more especially as he not only did not evince his repentance, by “relinquishing the station” which he obtained in such an iniquitous manner; but to *gain preferment* he asserts that he would again subscribe (if it could be done with an understanding that he may subscribe without believing every part), although he confesses that the creeds and articles *do not accord* “*with true, unadulterated Christianity*,” and which he says would then be a FARCE.

* Phil. iii. 12. 14.

† Luke vi. 47, 48.

The FIFTH WITNESS informed you that "he had preached the gospel thirty-four years," and that "one consideration furnished him with a satisfactory hope, that what he had taught is substantially at least the truth of God; which is this—the substance is the same with that which is found in almost EVERY Protestant creed; and with the scheme adopted in EVERY age by that part of the Christian Church which has gained EVERY WHERE the appropriate name of orthodox." This I suppose, Gentlemen, is the reason why the plaintiffs have been at the expense of subpoenaing him from the other side of the Atlantic; this it is that makes him popular; and for this cause they republish his works here, and promote the sale of them by all the means in their power; as they do also those of others who have written in support of their system. These productions are read with avidity by the multitude, and by them the system is upheld; and this confirms the saying of the apostle, "They are of the world, therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them." *

Now, Gentlemen, observe what this Witness states elsewhere—"All things (says he) which the Sacred Book contains, are to be received as they are. Our own opinions are implicitly to bow before them; and we are ever to be ready to believe what we think 'the foolishness of God, to be wiser than man'—than all the substituted opinions of ourselves or others. 'Let God be true,' ought to be our invariable language; but *every* man who opposes his declaration, 'a liar.' The gospel contains whatever it expresses, and whatever it implies; but it contains nothing more. *Nothing more* then can be lawfully inculcated by *any teacher* as a part of the gospel.—The sense we cannot change at all, for one which we conceive will better suit and support any part, or the whole, of a preconceived system; a doctrine of our own *philosophy*, or a tenet of the church, sect, or party to which we belong. THUS SAITH THE LORD, is to every Christian a POLE STAR, an infallible guide over the ocean of doubt. To know that any thing is the will of God, is enough.

* 1 John iv. 5.

He obeys, and asks no reasons to prove his obedience wise and safe. *No man ever obeys in a scriptural sense until after he believes.* The rules given by GOD ALONE render baptism lawful in any case; no qualifications in any person render him a proper candidate for baptism in any other sense than as they place him within those rules. Without these rules, regeneration would not render his baptism lawful. The apostles were directed to make disciples of all nations, and THEN to baptize them. The Scriptures teach us that the gospel is the great instrument of regeneration. Every one who reads the gospel must know, that to be baptized in the name of Christ, is to make a PUBLIC and most solemn profession of faith in Him as the redeemer of mankind. It is evident, beyond controversy, that adults were baptized by the apostles AFTER that they were either really or apparently regenerated. He who, understanding the nature and authority of the institution, refuses to be baptized, will NEVER ENTER either the visible or invisible kingdom of God. As he refuses to become a member of the visible, he will CERTAINLY BE SHUT OUT of the invisible kingdom. Considered with a reference to a case of this nature, the passage (He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned) may be JUSTLY CONSTRUED in the LITERAL manner; for he who persists in this act of rebellion against the authority of Christ, will NEVER BELONG TO HIS KINGDOM. A PUBLIC DECLARATION of our cordial belief in the doctrines and precepts of the gospel, is what is usually called a *Profession of Faith.*"

Now, Gentlemen, I ask if this evidence be not altogether in favour of my clients? and though the success of our cause does not depend upon any concessions made by our opponents, yet I might say that this is of itself sufficient to justify me in calling upon you for a verdict in our favour.—After such a declaration as that just mentioned, I cannot comprehend how the same individual can stand up and defend the practice of infant sprinkling, unless it be to show his talent in disputation, or more properly in sophistry; to show us how ingeniously he can make it appear that all his own words,

as well all the plainest and most positive declarations of Scripture, have no meaning, or a meaning directly the reverse of that which every man of common understanding believes them to convey.

Speaking of circumcision, he said, that that "covenant was a covenant of grace, in these terms, 'I will be your God, and ye shall be my people.' The conditions of it were, on the part of man, that he should believe in God, especially in the Redeemer, with an evangelical faith; and on the part of God, that this faith should be counted to the believer for righteousness. Of this covenant, *circumcision was originally the seal.*" Yet in another place he says, that "*circumcision was not, and could not be intended to be, a seal set by God upon the actual existing evangelical faith of those who were circumcised*; because a part of those who were first circumcised, and almost all those who were circumcised afterwards, were at the time of their circumcision unpossessed of, and incapable of this faith."

"Infant baptism is (he says) in the Scripture confined to the children of professing Christians. Infants are baptized in consequence of a profession of faith; but it is the profession of their parents, not their own. Infants can be received as belonging to Christ, in NO OTHER manner than that of receiving them into the church.—Children can come to Christ in the present world, so as to constitute a part of his kingdom, in NO OTHER MANNER than by becoming members of his visible church."

Now observe, Gentlemen, according to this Witness, the very men who profess such friendship for children are their GREATEST ENEMIES; insomuch as they prevent them, so far as in them lies, from entering heaven in the appointed way, which way, according to their own showing, is through the visible church. He says, that "all baptized persons are, by that class of Christians to whom he has attached himself, considered as members of the Christian Church; yet those who are baptized in infancy are not treated as if they possessed this character; particularly they are *not admitted* to the sacramental supper, nor made objects of ecclesiastical

discipline." To which he adds, this objection has, in his view, "a more serious import than any other which has been alleged, and I acknowledge (says he) without hesitation, that the conduct of those with whom I am in immediate communion, and so far as I know them, their opinions, also, with regard to this subject, are in a greater or less degree ERRONEOUS and INDEFENSIBLE."

And observe, further, the result of other parts of his evidence. He says, in the first place, that "The rules given by God alone render baptism lawful in any case." He has not shown in what part of the Will these rules are given to christen children; and until he points out the clause in which it is positively commanded, we must consider it an antichristian rite.

In the second place, he says that "salvation is proffered by God on his own terms only." Then, *if I may so express myself*, the terms are, believing and being baptized.

In the third place, "That which, on the part of mankind, makes them God's children, is their OWN VOLUNTARY GIFT of themselves."

"Infants are altogether passive;" therefore infants cannot be his children on this principle.

In the fourth place, "On the belief of the Gospel, Christ has made the SALVATION of the WHOLE HUMAN RACE ABSOLUTELY TO DEPEND."

Infants are a part of the human race, they are incapable of faith, therefore their salvation cannot rest on this foundation.

In the fifth place, that "Christ declares that 'he who believeth not,' whether BAPTIZED OR NOT, shall be damned."

As children are incapable of belief, the text can have no reference to them, and as by his evidence baptism can be of benefit to unbelievers, it can be of no benefit to them.

In the sixth place, that "God has no where promised that CHILDREN shall be regenerated."

Therefore, according to his doctrine, not one child, whether *sprinkled* or *unsprinkled*, will be saved; for he affirms that "*regeneration is the indispensable qualification for admission into the invisible kingdom of God.*"

I shall here advert to a circumstance stated by this witness, which corroborates what I have said of the FOURTH, respecting his manner of searching the Will. "A man (says he) employed in supporting a darling point, will, when hardly pushed, very naturally feel, that, as he undoubtedly must be right in his own system, so the Scriptures must some where declare that which he at the time wishes to teach. With these views he will naturally hunt for the passages which come nearest to the doctrine in question, and will as naturally believe that the meaning which he wishes to assign them is their true meaning. Hence he will attribute to them the implication which he wishes to find." But this does not apply to himself. He is candid: he tells you plainly that he had been compelled to give up opinions which he had previously entertained, and that whether he had "adopted better in their place is *yet to be determined*;" and further that what he teaches accords in substance with every Protestant creed. It is evident from this that the foundation of his faith rests more upon the doctrines and precepts of men, than upon the infallible record of the word of God. Had he made that and that only the foundation of his faith, he would not have stood in doubt of his real character in the sight of God. It would not then have been said of him (according to his own avowal), that he never spoke of himself "as a Christian"—that he did not know that he had "*any personal interest in the mediation of Christ*."

Can the evidence of a Witness like this have any weight with a conscientious jury? If he express himself with so much uncertainty on a subject of such momentous import, and on which all believers can speak with unwavering confidence, (after the manner of the apostle, "We know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is;")* "and we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ;")†—What regard can be

* 1 John iii. 2.

† 1 John v. 20.

paid to his evidence on other doctrinal subjects? It is clear that he himself has no confidence in them; consequently, Gentlemen, you cannot be expected to give credence to his testimony. Baptism he says is nowhere in the Scriptures declared to be immersion; and yet he tells you water may be administered by immersion, implying I presume that immersion is baptism. He would fain have you believe that there were young children in the houses both of Cornelius and the jailer; yet he appears willing to concede the point in the former instance, and in the latter he acknowledges that the household were baptized in consequence of their faith.

How is it possible that any individual can understand the Will, when the world in general, and the learned in particular, all take different views of it, and scarcely any two of them exactly agree upon any one point? This is a question very often asked; and why it is not understood, is well answered by this Witness, in that part of his evidence which I have just recapitulated. And still better by A. Knox, in his correspondence with Bishop Jebb, in which he says, "The simple, direct view of christianity has *very seldom* been taken. Most men, in all ages, have sat down to the gospel with a set of prejudices, which, like so many inquisitors, have laid the Christian religion on a bed like that of Procrustes; and as it suited them either mutilated it by violence, or extended it by force." Of this the Witnesses have given you a good specimen. But Bishop Jebb goes far beyond them; "It is (says he) my wish and prayer, that I may be saved from the SIMPLICITY OF BIBLE RELIGION." The first part of the question is answered by Solomon as follows; "My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; so that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God."*

* Proverbs ii. 1—5.

The SIXTH WITNESS has no confidence in his "hard arguments," for he did not know whether he should "succeed or fail." Consequently he "has" not "the witness in himself," or he would have known that having truth on his side he would ultimately overcome. He told you that, "As a Pædobaptist, he is accustomed, along with his brethren of the same persuasion, to administer the ordinance of baptism, to the infant children of believers; and that they are countenanced in so doing by their churches and congregations." Mark, Gentlemen, *not* by any direction from the Testator! Also that "there are too many, when in a state of *want of knowledge* they happen to fall in with a Baptist friend or a Baptist argument, are in danger of being *immediately* unsettled, and of hastily adopting what is presented to them with no little plausibility, and probably too with *much* imposing consequence." If these be his believers of whom he is here speaking, it shows upon what a sandy foundation their faith is built: but whether they are or are not, it indicates how little the plaintiffs are conversant with the creed which they at the commencement of their formal profession pretended to believe. And is it any wonder that the minds of his hearers should be kept in an unsettled state, when he tells them "that the sign of circumcision was not to Abraham the seal of his own personal justification; for this would be incompatible with subsequent trial, and with his giving diligence, like other believers, to make his calling and election sure?" Is it becoming a professor of the gospel, or is it any indication of his being a believer, to say this of him, whose faith was counted to him for righteousness; in whom all nations are to be blessed, and who in the Will is styled "FAITHFUL ABRAHAM?"* What is it to believe? Is it not to know and be assured that we ARE "justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus?"† to "know that we have passed from death unto life;"‡ and that "our life is hid with Christ in God."§

He says, that "We have abundant evidence that the particular rite is changed;" but "none whatever of any such

* Gal. iii. 6, 8, 9.

† Romans iii. 24.

‡ 1 John iii. 14.

§ Col. iii. 3.

change in its administration, as excludes children from being any longer the legitimate subjects of its observance." He is well aware how difficult it would be to confirm one of his assertions without contradicting the other. Or why, when he brought forward the Testator's commission, did he keep back the promise attached to it. He knows well that infants are incapable of being taught; and consequently that they are excluded from that particular promise. He thinks it strange if the reception of children with their parents were inconsistent with the spirituality of the gospel that, in the assembly of the apostles and elders at Jerusalem, no notice whatever was taken of the inconsistency of administering any sign to children on the admission of their parents into the Christian commonwealth. Does not this very omission in the letter of the apostles to the Gentile converts show unequivocally that the rite of christening children was not then practised? If it had been, would not the apostles have written them to abstain therefrom, as well as "from pollutions of idols and from fornication?" Every thing relating to the true worship of God is stated in plain and express terms, and there is nothing left for our invention. Therefore to introduce a rite into his church without his authority for so doing, is to offer an insult to his wisdom and prescience; as if he could not have foreseen what would be wanting, or had not wisdom sufficient to provide for it, but left it to his people to remedy the defects which should be discovered in after time.

Further (says he), "the circumstances of the early history of the church, after the apostolic age, are unaccountable on antipædobaptist principles; because Origen, Cyprian, Justin Martyr, and Austin, say that in their day it was the custom to baptize infants." We have invariably denounced the appeal to the uncertain traditions of men; and even these witnesses never admit the authority to which they now appeal, when it makes against their particular views. But here, because it lends them some support, it is unquestionable, and ought by all means to be admitted! But we say, "to the law and to the testimony: if they speak

not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.”*

“It has often (he said) been asked, ‘What are the uses of infant baptism? What good ends are answered by it?’ It ought first to be observed, however, that with regard to all such questions as the one so often put, and so *confidently* answered, there is obviously a previous question; Is it or is it not a divine institution? We, however (says he), freely admit that it is reasonable to expect that there should be some uses apparent of whatever the God of infinite wisdom enjoins; and on the present occasion we feel no difficulty in meeting the enquiry. Infant baptism contains a constant memorial of original sin. It teaches very simply, but very significantly, that even from the womb children are the subjects of pollution: that they stand in need of pardon of the original apostacy.”

Yes, Gentlemen, we reiterate both these questions—What is its use? Is it a divine institution? He does not enter into the proof of the latter question; neither do we, as we have previously given unquestionable authority that it is not a divine institution. But our opponents may say, that though it be not a divine institution, it nevertheless has its use; that many good and important ends are answered by it; and therefore, upon that account alone, it is deserving of consideration. Now what is its use? and what important end does it answer? It is (he says) “a constant memorial of original sin; it teaches—that even from the womb children are the subjects of pollution, and that they stand in need of pardon of the original apostacy.” Well, even if these things were real, substantial existences (which they really are not, in the sense in which these Witnesses consider them), the infant could not be benefited by the memorial—he is unconscious of the design of all this antisciptural ceremony; he knows nothing of what is going forward; he has the sensation arising from a few drops of water falling on his face, but why or wherefore he is so treated, he knows not. And as the instruction that is thus supposed to be afforded has relation only

* Isaiah viii, 20.

to children, it cannot benefit the spectators who are become adult, and who being conscious and accountable beings, are standing in a different capacity. Can there be any instruction conveyed to the beholders by the exhibition of a bowl of water, and the sprinkling of a few drops of it upon an infant's face, further than pointing out the folly of the system? An infant cannot be an apostate—it has no faith to forsake; and who but the plaintiffs could imagine that “the Lord” who proclaimed himself, “The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth,”* could condemn an innocent for the apostacy of Adam?

“The doctrine of baptismal regeneration (says this Witness) is in many respects as PERNICIOUS in its tendencies, as it is ABSURD on principles of reason, and destitute of foundation in Scripture; it is a doctrine of the Church of Rome, and it *harmonizes* well with the innumerable *absurdities* of that antichristian communion; it is contained also in the articles and baptismal service of the Church of England, constituting one of the remnants of popery of which there are too many in her constitution. The only wonder is that any man of common sense should have mentioned it.”

This is strong language, Gentlemen, as applied to the community to which he belongs; and, as far as it goes, I desire nothing more favourable to the cause which I am advocating. *The wonder is*, how he can continue a public minister of a community, other public ministers of which, as you have heard in evidence, hold the very doctrines which he denounces as remnants of popery. But there is another wonder, Gentlemen, *i. e.* that he himself should, after the manner of those whom he denounces, not only adopt the same tradition, original sin, but apply the same antichristian rite to cleanse from it.

If he affuses a child, merely to show “the necessity of regeneration,” does he not at the same time show that the child is not benefited by the effusion? because it only points out the necessity of an operation which it is not able to effect. Yet, says he, “there is surely no contradiction nor

* Exodus xxxiv. 6.

incongruity in infant baptism—nothing certainly in it to warrant the scorn and ridicule with which it has been assailed.” It is not, as we have shown, in accordance with the Divine Testimony ; consequently it merits all the obloquy that has been cast upon it.

“ Let it not (says he) be said, that the *ground of ridicule* is, that infants are incapable of that faith which the *New Testament affirms* to be necessary to baptism, and of which baptism is the profession. It has often been remarked, and it has never been satisfactorily answered, that this mode of reasoning, if valid for the exclusion of infants from baptism, must be equally valid for their exclusion from salvation.—If it be a correct syllogism—believing is necessary to baptism ; infants are incapable of believing ; therefore no infants ought to be baptized. The following must be correct to. Believing is necessary to salvation ; infants are incapable of believing, therefore infants cannot be saved.”

This analogy would be perfect according to our views of right reason, if the two cases were exactly parallel, *i. e.* if it can be proved that the salvation of innocents and that of sinful beings are one and the same thing. Or, that the deliverance from the effects of temporal death, introduced by the sin of Adam ; and the deliverance from eternal death, the punishment due to our personal offences, are synonymous. This I apprehend our opponents are unable to prove. Until they do so, we must deny the legitimacy of their reasoning. And although, as I have before stated, the Scriptures are silent with regard to the future state of infants ; I have no doubt that all who die before they commit personal transgressions, will be eternally happy. “ Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right.”* He who “ is righteous in all his ways.”

“ To the children of godly parents (he says) I would briefly, but affectionately say ; *you enjoy*, or *you have enjoyed*, a most precious privilege ; a blessing for which you cannot be too thankful.” Gentlemen, mark this, he says, you enjoy, or have enjoyed ! What ? The privilege of being christened, respecting which he afterwards tells them, that “ if from

* Gen. xviii. 25.

that circumstance they fancy themselves Christians, they are in the same fatal error in which the Jews were, who imagined themselves children of Abraham and of God, because they were circumcised." "I speak not (says he) of vows made by your parents in your name; and far less, of god-fathers and god-mothers stepping in between you and them, and taking upon themselves the gratuitous responsibility in your behalf; because I find none of these things in my Bible, and regard them, along with *some other* practices, as inventions of men; human appendages to a simple institution."

These concluding observations bring to my recollection an anecdote I have heard of two ministers, the one an Episcopalian, the other an Independent. The latter was the guest of the former; and during his visit, he witnessed the christening of a child by his friend. After the ceremony was over, the following dialogue took place.

Ind. I am surprised, BROTHER, that you should imagine sponsors can believe by proxy for the infant.

Epis. Why so, BROTHER?

Ind. Because I do not find these things in my Bible.

Epis. Oh! There you are mistaken.

Ind. Indeed I am not.

Epis. I am sure they are to be found there, or they would not be in the rubric.

Ind. Nonsense, there is nothing of the sort.

Epis. Nothing of the sort? There must be, or the learned and good men who instituted the ceremony would not have required them.

Ind. Brother, let me remove your delusions? Sponsors are not mentioned in the Bible; they are an invention of men, one *among a number of other relics of popery* that still remain in your Church.

Epis. (In a passion) I say that they are mentioned in the Bible; and if you will find me the passage where sprinkling an infant is commanded, I will engage to find sponsors for their proxy, either in the verse preceding, or the verse following it.

The SEVENTH WITNESS told you that he "had long felt

himself particularly called upon to give his evidence upon this subject; that Christians were actually beginning to despair of any result from the existing controversy," and that "several churches have been formed of late years on an understood acknowledgment, that the Word of God gives no *explicit* instruction to his people on so rudimental a subject as the ordinance of baptism. Every member is therefore left to do respecting it, that which is right in his own eyes: it is agreed, whatever each may think or do for himself, that that ordinance shall in no form and in no case be admitted into any part of their public worship."

These are just such churches, Gentlemen, as you would naturally expect to spring from the preaching of men like the plaintiff's witnesses. Could any thing better be expected from their conflicting sentiments? Here is a specimen of churches formed upon the principle of that universal, but *spurious* charity, by which the ordinances of the Lord's house, and his positive commandments, shall be compromised; and by general consent never be named among professors, lest it should disturb the peace and harmony which now prevail amongst them.

Now, Gentlemen, I call your particular attention to the second sentence which this Witness uttered, as it shows, in a striking manner, the evil effect of sprinkling infants. "Reasons says he) may be assigned, though not to justify, yet to account for, much of the ignorance which prevails among Christians respecting baptism. When they first have their attention directed to the observance of ordinances, they do not usually take much notice of baptism, which they believe they have already received; but rather of the Lord's Supper, which they desire to partake of as the highest privilege of saints on earth."

To be reckoned one of the family of the Most High, is certainly our highest privilege; but it behoves us to examine ourselves, and see that we have on a wedding garment, ere we presume to sit down at his table; lest we should find ourselves in the same situation as the man who is mentioned in the twenty-second chapter of Matthew. To whom did

our Lord say, "This do in remembrance of me"? Was it not to the twelve baptized disciples? And was it not to men who were "sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints,"—whom Paul admonished respecting their manner of partaking of the Supper—men who "believed and were baptized?"* Is it not evident, then, from these examples, that no person who has not been baptized after he believed, can sit down at the Lord's table without subjecting himself to the denunciations of Paul?

See now in what an awful situation this Witness places himself and his followers. He it is that affuses them in infancy; he is the cause of the little notice they take of baptism, and he it is who makes them believe that they have already been baptized; consequently, it is through his instructions that they eat and drink unworthily. Nevertheless, being of age, they are, conjointly with himself, responsible for their acts.

He does not deny that "antipædobaptist sentiments have for several years been making considerable progress;" but this he attributes, not to the force of truth, but to "the mixture of error and inconsistent practice in those who before held the truth generally on the controverted subject." I think, Gentlemen, we may safely assert that the progress is accelerated by the force of truth, and the inconsistency of those who sprinkle children; for as soon as a person discovers for himself that there is no real comfort to be derived from the doctrines which these Witnesses teach, he will naturally flee to the only sure guide, the Bible (this being acknowledged by all of them to be the standard of truth). And if he searches it with his whole heart, and with fervent prayer, it will not be long before he will be led to see that the baptism of a believer is according to the commandment of the Testator; and that the christening of an infant is "after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."†

"It unfortunately happens (says he) that the ordinance of baptism has come into Protestant churches, with an UNCOMMONLY LARGE SHARE OF THE SUPERSTITIOUS ABSURDITIES OF

* Acts xviii. 8.

† Col. ii. 8.

THE CHURCH OF ROME. Who can be surprised (says he) at the number of antipædobaptists in the southern part of the Island, where it is a general system to baptize all children; where the whole service is a transaction between a priest and certain sureties, called god-fathers and god-mothers; where the priest is made to talk as if to the child; and the sureties are made to answer in his name; where a formal bargain is struck, between Christ on the one hand, and the child on the other, in consideration of certain promises to be performed by each party to the other; where the priest must pray that the water to be used may be made holy; where he is directed to dip the child, and yet uniformly pours water upon it; where, after baptism, the priest makes a cross upon the child's forehead, and gives thanks to God for his regeneration?"

This Witness, like his brother who preceded him, rails against the practice of the Established Church, which is very unbecoming in them both. They ought first to correct their own practice, before they find fault with hers. What if she be called the elder daughter of the Church of Rome; is not their church a younger branch of the same family? They are not only of the same stock with her whom they accuse, but are even more inconsistent than she is; they make a difference between the infants of professors, and the infants of those who have not made a profession, which she does not; and in this her departure from the tenor of the Will, which puts no difference between them, is not so wide as theirs. It declares that "God hath made of one blood all nations of men."* "Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us."† Job says, "Did not he that made me in the womb make him? and did not one fashion us in the womb?"‡ (or did he not fashion us in one womb?)

"However interesting (says he) the occasions for adult baptism may *sometimes* be in themselves," they "generally arise out of circumstances to be remembered with regret. But there is unmixed joy in the baptism of an infant." Is

* Acts xvii. 26.

† Mal. ii. 10.

‡ Job xxxi. 15.

not this "perverse disputing—and destitute of the truth"? Every regenerated man must certainly look back with regret at his past sinful life; but when he *knows*, and *declares* in the ordinance of baptism, that his sins are, through the mercy of the Lord, blotted out, he has unmixed joy, and his fellow-Christians rejoice that another sinner is delivered from condemnation—another prodigal reclaimed, and restored to the paternal roof of his heavenly Father. But what joy can be experienced at the christening of an infant? It has no sins to be blotted out, no faith to profess. It was held guiltless before the ceremony; and by the ceremony it is not made more acceptable? For what purpose then is it affused? Merely to delude its deluded parents.

I shall here (in reference to that part of this Witness' evidence where he said, "in thirty years ministry it has happened to me to baptize three adults,") put this question to him; Would he, before he had affused these three adults, have affused their offspring? According to his profession he would not. Then did he not "sit in judgment on a whole lineage" of three families, "the history of which for a very limited period must have been unknown to him?" Why then does he accuse the defendants of wholly omitting a rite, which he himself will perform in particular cases only; and for which particular cases, even, he has no authority from the Will?

I shall here introduce a passage from the evidence of this Witness, which contains his observation upon a text of Scripture discovering great fertility of imagination.

"We may now understand (says he), also, the benefit connected with the extensive administration of baptism. It is this, that in the house of a believer 'a remnant shall be saved.' *This exceeding great and precious promise*, of which baptism is a sign, is not limited to one generation, but abides with the *family in every successive descent, as long as it shall exist upon earth.*"

How such an inference as this can be drawn from the words "a remnant shall be saved,"* I am at a loss to deter-

* Rom. ix. 27.

mine. It is certainly at variance with the testimony of the Evangelist John, who declares that "as many as receive Christ—are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

"While the Holy Spirit (says he) glorifies the Saviour in the case of saved hearers, by accompanying the preaching of the gospel with a quickening and converting influence, he equally glorifies him in the case of saved infants, by anticipating, not only in the order of nature, but in the order of time also, the physical power of hearing the gospel.

What can he mean, Gentlemen, by "anticipating the physical power of hearing the gospel?" The word of God affords no answer to this question. Our Lord says, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear;" but he never calls upon any one to hear who has not a capacity for hearing. He never requires impossibilities.

Gentlemen, I shall next give you a specimen of his logic. "Nay (says he), without baptism, we are *taught* that NO ONE can enter into the kingdom of God. We mean not to assert that baptism is ABSOLUTELY INDISPENSABLE to salvation. But certainly there is a meaning not to be *despised* in the two following passages; "Except a man (ANY ONE) be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God."* "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be condemned."† From this text, some (says he) infer, that a person must *actually* believe else he cannot be baptized. With as much reason they might infer that a *person* must *actually* believe, else he cannot be saved, especially as it is added, "He that believeth not shall be condemned." But it is acknowledged that infants shall not be condemned, because they do not believe. No objections can therefore be brought from this text against the baptism of infants."

I am persuaded, Gentlemen, that neither this nor any other text will have any weight with this Witness. Our Lord says, "He that believeth not shall be damned;" he says it would be equally as unreasonable to conclude from

* John iii. 5.

† Mark xvi. 16.

this text that a person cannot be saved without faith, as it would be to conclude a person must believe before he can be baptized; therefore as it would be absurd to believe the one, it must be equally absurd to believe the other. Thus he sets at nought our Lord's declaration.

Having given you a specimen of his logic, I shall now give you a specimen of his manner of treating the administration of the various baptisms mentioned in the Will; a manner which does not bespeak him an "able minister of the New Testament."

"I believe (says he) that John frequented the Jordan, as the most convenient place, not only for multitudes to attend him, but also for having water—to baptize them—that the whole language of Scripture relates to the place, and not to the act, nor the mode of baptism." Speaking of our Lord's baptism, he *thinks* the passage ought to be thus translated, "and immediately coming from the water." "Now (says he) it surely will not be said that Philip had occasion to go further with the eunuch than John did with our Saviour."

He says, "When I read that John was baptizing in Ænon, because there was much water there, I see nothing concerning immersion; such indeed is the general scarcity of water in the Holy Land as to render immersion, so often as was required during the days of the Testator and his apostles, ALTOGETHER INCREDIBLE.

"When I read in the 2d of Acts, of three thousand being baptized, *I receive no conviction* that Peter sent away so much as one person drenched and dripping.

"When I read Acts x. 47, *I believe* that Peter proposed that water should be brought for affusion, not that they should be carried to a bath, a pool, or a river.

"I have precisely the *same persuasion* when I read Acts xxii. 16.

"When Lydia was baptized and her house, I no *more believe* that she and her family were immersed in the river, than the jailer and his family were immersed by Paul and Silas. Water was brought to wash their stripes, and water *was brought* to baptize them."

Speaking of the defendants, he says, "I certainly think your baptism to be the human improvement of a superstitious age, and to partake of all the *monstrosity* in its form, and all the cruelty of unwarrantable exclusion in its diminished administration, which might be expected from such an origin. Nay (says he) I know not if any thing like 'it' is to be found among all the corruptions and enormities of an idol's temple."

He could say nothing worse of the practice of those who "built the high places of Baal—to cause their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire unto Molech." * Therefore with equal propriety he may say to them (after the manner of his address to the defendants), "My dear and respected" antichristian "brethren of the Molechite persuasion (for I trust you will still permit me so to call you) must not suppose that I charge them with any want of a sense of propriety, or delicacy, in the animadversions which I feel it my duty to make on their method of" worshipping Molech. "I give them full credit for acting according to their conscience in this matter; and I am well aware, that when a man is brought to think that he is serving God, it is impossible that he should for a moment admit the thought, that the service is not every thing that is solemn and lovely." And it would be no more contradictory in him, to say to the Molochites, than to the defendants, "I regard many of you as SAINTS and FAITHFUL in Christ Jesus. If he think believer's baptism that enormity which he describes it to be, he ought not to fawn in the manner he does upon those who practise it; he should be candid, and tell them of their errors; and until they renounce them, he should separate himself from them. But he may rest assured that his flattery will never cajole any one *worthy* the name of a follower of Christ.

At the conclusion of his evidence he called upon Christian parents to give thanks for the baptism of their families; and on their children to give thanks for the baptism of their infancy: and then he warned all men not to trust in the observance of ordinances, either for the salvation of their own souls, or

* Jer. xxxii. 35.

for that of others. Now, Gentlemen, if children are not reckoned Christians before they are christened, it is very evident by this that they are not so reckoned by being christened, seeing there is nothing to work a change but the mere observance of the rite, upon which, according to his own avowal, no reliance is to be placed. He further says, that many are disposed to think themselves Christians, because they were baptized in their infancy, thereby implying that they neither are now, nor ever were, Christians. "Many (says he) desire to have their children baptized, that they may not be reproached as Pagans, who show no desire that either themselves or their children should obtain mercy of the Lord, or live in his fear and service."

Here, Gentlemen, I shall take my leave of this Witness, being well assured that this part of his evidence will have the greatest preponderance with you.

The EIGHTH, introduced himself to the Court by a flattering recommendation from eleven of his brethren. He told you there are four dispensations under which religion has principally subsisted since the fall; the first of which was—The dispensation of the LIGHT OF NATURE. "Let it then be inquired (said he), What judgment doth REASON, or the Light of Nature, pass upon their case (that of infants)?" Uncharitable people might suppose from this that the Witness and his constituents are the disciples of Tom Paine. We are not so uncharitable; nevertheless, we are of opinion that sentiments like these, coming from a professed minister of the gospel, cast a suspicion on whatever he may have stated in this Court—for at what time, since the creation of Adam, were the people of God left to the *Light of Reason* or of *Nature*? Was it Reason, or the Light of Nature, that revealed to Eve that her seed should bruise the serpent's head? Was it by *Reason*, or the *Light of Nature*, that "Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous"? Was it by *Reason*, or the *Light of Nature*, that "Enoch was translated that he should not see death"? Was it by *Reason*, or the *Light of Nature*, that Noah had intimation that the Creator of the

world was about to destroy it? Was it by *Reason*, or the *Light of Nature*, that he “became heir of the righteousness which is by faith”? But it is downright folly to reason with any one on this subject. There never was a period of the world in which the Lord’s people were left to the *Light of Nature*. The Lord conversed immediately with Adam; Enoch prophesied of the Testator, and “walked with God.” Noah was said of the Lord to have been upright, and he also “walked with God.”

You have observed, Gentlemen, that the chief of his argument, except what *Reason* supplied him with from the *Light of Nature*, was taken from the covenant of circumcision; and that he intended to prove that Jewish infants, on account of their being circumcised, were more favoured, while in an infant state, than the uncircumcised infants of the heathen; and that from the tenor of his evidence, we must conclude that he accounts every Jew, and every proselyte who circumcised his child, a believer; therefore, as every Jewish male child was circumcised, it follows that the descendants of Israel were a nation of believers.

The Jews were more highly favoured than any other people. “For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them?”* Yet by their disobedience they lost all their privileges. Is it not declared that “Manasseh made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to err, and to do worse than the heathen”?† And is it not said by the Almighty, “Therefore will I cast you out of this land into a land that ye know not, neither ye nor your fathers; and there ye shall serve other gods day and night; where I will not show you favour”?‡ Where, then, was the difference between the heathen and the unbelieving Jews? and where was the difference between their children, notwithstanding that Jewish males were circumcised at eight days old?

“We are not (says this Witness) to imagine that all infants, dying such, but those of believers, or all which die unbaptized, will be annihilated, or never rise again; but the superior advantage to believers’ infants above others is; 1. That

* Deut. iv. 7.

† 2 Chron. xxxiii. 9.

‡ Jer. xvi. 13.

with respect to these, God has been pleased to lay himself under a more particular covenant or promise of a resurrection to a future happiness; whereas the others are left more to his uncovenanted mercy. And, 2. Their circumstances, in a future state, may, agreeably to all the moral perfections of God, be supposed more happy and advantageous than theirs who were never thus so solemnly devoted to him."

Now, Gentlemen, note his account of the supposed value of this superior advantage to sprinkled infants!

"ALL rational creatures (says he), there is reason to believe, are somewhere or other placed in a state of DISCIPLINE or PROBATION, before they pass into a state of fixed and unalterable bliss. Infants dying such, therefore, there is ground to presume, pass into such a state. Now as, in our present state of trial, some are placed in circumstances far more advantageous and favourable than others, so PROBABLY is it in the state to which dying infants pass. Abraham's posterity were put in circumstances more favourable for attaining virtue and happiness, than other nations of the earth, on account of their father's piety. The same may be justly HOPED as to dying infants of GOOD men, who, *according to God's command*, have been solemnly devoted to him, whom he hath *acknowledged* for his children, and to whom he hath by a *sacred covenant* promised to be a God."

Would you have believed, Gentlemen, if you had not heard the evidence, that there could be found in England, in these *which are termed* enlightened days, eleven public Protestant professors of the Will, who would recommend a witness to the notice of this Court in support of such a dogma, when there is nothing of the sort to be found in the Will—nothing in support of, or to give the most distant countenance to, the doctrine of there being any state of probation after this life—nothing but what declares that the final state of every individual is unalterably fixed, and finally determined, the moment that life becomes extinct?

Paul says, "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord."*

* 1 Thess. iv. 17.

"We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump."* "Absent from the body—present with the Lord."† Solomon says, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest."‡ "If the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be."§ And David says, "They (the wicked) shall *never* see light."

It must, Gentlemen, be evident to you all, that this Witness is convinced he could not from the Will make out a clear case for the plaintiffs; otherwise he would not show the leanness of their cause by bringing to his aid "Apostolic Tradition" and "Authentic History." While he himself acknowledges that, so far as respects the first ages, there is little more of what he calls authentic history handed down, than the AUTHOR'S NAMES, and a FEW PIECES of their works. Add to which, he acknowledges also, that it was a *credulous* age, and that no less than NINETY different heresies sprang up in the three first centuries; about one half more than we number in this country at the present day. But, Gentlemen, even if the proof were clear, that it was the practice at that time to sprinkle infants, this could not in the least influence your verdict. The Will is not to be set aside by any thing gleaned from ecclesiastical history, be it ever so well authenticated; for if it could be proved to a certainty, that it was practised, even in the days of the apostles, what would it avail? It would only be an evidence of the truth of John's testimony, who said that "even now (in his day) are there many antichrists." It may be presumed, from prophecy, that the body of the people will be better informed a hundred years hence, than to christen infants; although they will have abundance of authentic history in proof that sprinkling was generally practised a century before.

I shall here state his six queries, "which are soon to lead to an easy issue of the cause," and shall answer each of them in succession.

* 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52.

† 2 Cor. v. 8.

‡ Eccles. ix. 10.

§ Eccles. xi. 3.

1. Are not infants, in the eye of the Christian law, under a sentence of condemnation, and treated as sinners?"

Ans. I do not exactly comprehend the term "Christian law," but I suppose that by it he means the gospel dispensation. I therefore, in answer to this question, say that infants, having no knowledge of moral right or wrong, cannot be considered as sinners; sin is the transgression of the law, therefore, being innocent—having no consciousness of guilt, they cannot come under condemnation. "Nevertheless death reigns—even over them that have not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression;"* and they are, therefore, in common with every living creature, subject to the dissolution of their bodies. But "as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive."†

2. "Are they not consequently, in the eye of that law, capable of justification, and of being treated as righteous?"

Ans. Infants, never having transgressed the law of God, can have nothing laid to their charge from which to be justified. Adam, the head of the creation, having sinned, all the creation suffered, and through his transgression lost their natural life. Having violated the law of God, he brought death into the world, and therefore could not hand down to his posterity what he had lost. Christ came to restore all things. Infants, by their union to Him, the second Adam, are delivered from the dominion of death. "Therefore, as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men to justification of life."‡

3. "If then they are capable of justification and remission, is it not MOST HIGHLY REASONABLE, and even necessary, to suppose that the Christian law, which is a manifestation of God's richest mercy to mankind, has made provision for it, and given some token of it?"

Ans. Infants are incapable of committing sin, and therefore have none to be remitted. By their union to the second Adam, they will participate in the blessings of the resurrection life, which are secured in Him, and shall enjoy them to all eternity. Thus ample provision is made for them.

* Rom. v. 14.

† 1 Cor. 15. 22.

‡ Rom. v. 18.

4. "Were not infants of believers taken into covenant with God; and did not they stand in a more immediate relation to him than the infants of the unbelieving Canaanites, Moabites, &c. both under the Abrahamic and Mosaic dispensations? And was not this a peculiar honour and advantage to those infants?"

Ans. It was a peculiar honour and advantage to be born the children of God's chosen people, for to them only "were committed the oracles of God;" but this did not secure their eternal salvation, nor make any difference between them and other children, while they remained in an infantile state. Their immediate advantage was being born subjects of the land of Canaan, which was in a peculiar manner under the immediate providence of God, and where his mind and will were made known. But in other respects they were upon equality with the heathen. For Paul says, that "he is not a Jew which is one outwardly;" but that "circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter." Children cannot be circumcised of heart, therefore there can be no spiritual difference in infancy between one child and another.

5. "Are not infants of us, Christians, as capable of this favour, viz., of being taken visibly into God's covenant, as their (the Israelites') infants were? but if ours are not, is not here an important circumstance, in which both the Abrahamic and Mosaic dispensations were more favourable to mankind, and manifested greater grace than the dispensation of Jesus Christ?"

Ans. There neither is now, nor ever was, a spiritual covenant made with children, as children, of the present or former dispensation. Nevertheless, the children of these days are as much more favoured than those of old, as the present dispensation exceeds in glory that of the past; *i. e.* if they live to be instructed into it. The spiritual covenant is described by the Lord thus; "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people."* Infants are incapable of being brought into this covenant.

* Jer. xxxi. 33.

6. "Are not the infants of Christians (who are now an holy priesthood, and who succeed to all the privileges of the Jewish Church), are not, I say, their infants as capable of being disciplined, as the infants of the Jewish priesthood were of being enrolled in the temple register, and entered as ministers to Aaron, and as keeping the charge of the sanctuary? and are not infants as capable, under the Christian covenant, of being baptized, as they were of circumcision both under the Abrahamic and Mosaic?"

Ans. The infant children of the Levites were born to serve in the priest's office at the appointed time; yet their circumcision differed nothing from the children of the other tribes. But no man's child is born a Christian; neither is it in the power of man to make a Christian minister. It is impossible to disciple infants, that is, to make Christians of them; they may, as they grow up, be instructed in the principles of the gospel; as Paul may plant, and Apollos water, but God only gives the increase. They are capable of, and may be registered, for the purpose of referring to their lineage, their age, &c. For the same purpose the infants of the Levites were enrolled in the temple register. We have daily instances of the sprinkling of infants, but it has never been proved that it was commanded, though we have ample proof that circumcision was, yet no proof that it was attended with any spiritual advantage to the child. Circumcised Judah is classed with uncircumcised "Egypt, and Judah and Edom, and the children of Ammon, and all that — dwell in the wilderness. For all these nations are uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel are uncircumcised in the heart;" and "I, saith the Lord, will punish all them that are circumcised, with the uncircumcised."*

"The commission (says he) so far from concluding any thing against the baptism of infants, strongly favours and supports it. Our Lord's silence as to their admission is a *strong* and a *most* manifest *presumption* in their favour; and his not excluding or excepting them from the Christian covenant, is in all *equitable construction* a *permission* or *ORDER* that they should be admitted into it."

* Jer. ix. 25, 26.

How can this be, Gentlemen? Moses was not forbidden to smite the rock, there was no exception made to his smiting it; the simple command was, "Take the rod, and speak ye to the rock before their eyes:" However, he smote it; and what was the consequence? He was deprived of the honour and gratification of leading the people into the promised land—a people who had professed subjection to him, but who had tried, provoked, and grieved him for forty years. Moses did not act as these people act. It was, we may presume, in a moment of excitement that he smote the rock twice; and spoke unadvisedly with his lips. But these people coolly and determinately tell you, and year after year systematically and treacherously deceive their fellow creatures by telling them, that, not to prohibit a thing is, in fact, to permit it. Yea, to order it! Against whom was the dreadful curse pronounced in Isaiah lxx. 12? Was it not against a people which, to judge from their actions, argued after the manner of this witness; "A people that burnt incense upon altars of brick." Yet we do not read in the Old Testament that they were expressly forbidden to make altars of brick; the prohibition was implied in the command, "Thou shalt make an altar to burn incense upon: of shittim-wood shalt thou make it,"* &c. By the same rule, then, the act of christening infants, although it is not forbidden in the New Testament, is as much in opposition to, and defiance of, the divine command, (teach all nations, baptizing them,) as was that of Moses smiting the rock; or that of the Israelites burning incense upon altars of brick. A total silence in the word of God respecting any rite or doctrine, is a sufficient indication or warning that he never intended us to practise the one, or believe the other.

The commission is—"He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved." And "This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws in their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his

* Exod. xxx. 1.

neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."* Hence it is manifest that these promises are individually experienced, and that he in whose heart these laws are thus written, must know that the "God of peace" will preserve him blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He therefore confesses him in the ordinance of baptism, professing entire dependence upon him for life and salvation. But this cannot be done by any one for another. It is altogether of the Lord's good pleasure to write his laws in the heart of any individual; and every soul that is so blessed to Him ascribes all the glory. "The salvation of the righteous is of the Lord."†

"It is (says he) a RATIONAL act of worship for parents, from the very dawn or first beginning of life, to devote their children to God, and to the peculiar influences of his Spirit." And he shows the rationality of the act thus. "The LIGHT OF NATURE itself seems plainly to have taught this. It was the custom of the Romans, on the ninth day from the child's birth, for its friends and relations to bring it to the temple, and before the altars of the gods to recommend it to the protection of some TUTELAR DEITY. A ceremony of the same nature also was performed among the Greeks." And so the light of nature, perverted to idolatrous purposes, must be the guide to those who have the divine revelation. Surely, after this, we cannot be thought illiberal for saying, that sprinkling a child partakes much more of a heathen rite, than of a christian ordinance.

Hitherto, Gentlemen, this witness has been endeavouring to prove that the advantage of sprinkling is exclusively for the infant of the believer. Now mark how he changes sides, and goes off to the opposite extreme; saying, "By infants of believers are not to be understood only their natural offspring, but any infants which are their property, or members of their household, or whose religious education they

* Heb. viii. 10—12.

† Psa. xxxvii. 39.

will solemnly undertake. Foundling infants, therefore, are very RATIONALLY brought to baptism by those who will engage solemnly for their Christian education."

Here, then, we see all the so much boasted privilege of a believer's child at once reduced to nothing; we see it brought to the lowest level, and placed upon a par with the *foundling* of a *prostitute*. What better proof can we have, that this Witness, and his constituents, believe, notwithstanding all their laboured arguments to the contrary, that there is no difference in children while in their infantile state? Yet, would you believe it, these are the people who are continually finding fault with the Established Church? Is it becoming of them so to do, when they themselves proclaim their unity—the union of Independents with Episcopalians? To be sure, there is this difference between them; the latter are the most cautious; they will not christen a child unless three sponsors can be found, to assist each other in the work, and engage for it, to renounce the devil and all his works; so that if one, or even two die, the child is not left destitute; while the former leave the important trust of making the child a Christian to the solemn engagement of one individual only.

This Witness must surely be conscious that he was bearing false witness, or he would not have pleaded, as an excuse for his own error in changing the ordinance of the Testator, what he thinks errors in the Israelitish family. They are the following—

1. The children of Israel, not being circumcised during their journey in the wilderness.
2. David and his men eating the shew-bread.
3. Hezekiah destroying the brazen serpent.

What is his object in bringing forward the two instances of a departure from the strict letter of the law? (For as to the third which he names, it does not appear to be a breach of any law, but a wise measure for the prevention of idolatry.) Is it not to obtain a degree of countenance for his own departure from the express commands of the Testator? That as the deviations from the law, in these two cases, were over-

looked by the Great Lawgiver; so the deviations of professing Christians may be also overlooked. Is not this a full acknowledgment, Gentlemen, that he does not profess to abide by them? What then becomes of all his sophistical reasoning, in proof, either that he does abide by them, or that he has a precedent for departing from them? Has he not, in one instance or the other, taken much unnecessary pains?

You will have observed, Gentlemen, that he does not contend that the word baptize does not mean to immerse; but that immersion is not its only meaning; but even here he is so careful of committing himself, that from the undecided manner in which he speaks, he leads you to conjecture that he believes it to be its only meaning. For instance, he says, "it may be *strongly presumed* that plunging was not practised either by John or our Lord." That "if the word baptize will AT ALL admit of this sense (sprinkling or pouring)." That "should immersion be allowed to have been the only scriptural mode of baptizing, it may lawfully be exchanged for sprinkling or pouring."

"The commission (he says) is delivered in such general terms as to be capable of admitting infants." This I deny; the promise affixed to it (to which he did not dare to allude) independently of the word "TEACH," confines it to BELIEVERS ONLY.

The following is a short summary of his "manly and conclusive reasoning." That, "From the light of nature the pious parent has nothing wherein to trust but the uncovenanted mercy of God."

That, "Reason surmises and hopes that the Almighty Rewarder can give to their harmless babes pleasures and entertainments abundantly to counterbalance the sufferings of their present state; but cannot certainly conclude."

That, "From the covenant established with the cattle and the fowl, God may be said to establish his covenant with infants."

That, "It may be justly *hoped* that the dying infants of *good* men, when in a state of *probation*, are put in circum-

stances more favourable for attaining virtue and happiness than others."

That, "The practice of baptizing infants was primitive and apostolic, as proved by APOSTOLIC TRADITION."

That, "It was likewise the *constant, ever prevailing custom* of all the ENEMIES of Christianity, both *Jews* and *Pagans*, to admit infants to a participation of their religious ceremonies."

That, "Baptizing into the name, signifies commending a person to the *patronage*, of him in whose name he is baptized. The *Romans* and *Greeks* recommended their infants to some *tutelar deity*."

That, "Judith not going over head, when she washed in a fountain, is one clear and incontestible proof that baptism is not overwhelming."

These are some of the examples of that "direct appeal to DIVINE REVELATION and authentic history," which he told you his eleven brethren were satisfied he would make, and which they would most cordially unite in publishing and circulating, to the extent which its *merits deserve*.

Now, Gentlemen, you will be pleased to notice the manner in which he closed his evidence. "To conclude (says he); if after this any still think it their indispensable duty to baptize by immersion *only*, let them by all means thus baptize; but we BESEECH them to forbear all severe censures of those who are not dipt. Let them not represent us as persons unbaptized—withdraw from our churches—refuse communion with us at the common table of our Lord, upon so TRIFLING a difference."

What inference is to be drawn from this appeal at the conclusion of his labours? By every means in his power, he has sought to uphold a system which he espouses; to prove the perfections of the superstructure, and the stability of the foundation upon which it rests. But it appears to me that he has not advanced sufficient to satisfy even himself, much less to satisfy this Court. Is there not a lurking suspicion in his own mind that he is in error; for had he the conviction that he stood upon a rock, he would have made no

such concessions to his opponents; nor would he have desired conditions of peace on such dishonourable terms as a compromise of the commandments and ordinances of the Testator; neither would he have denominated the observance or non-observance of them a matter of TRIFLING MOMENT—for to this the difference between us amounts. And I may very well state, in the words of this Witness, that if the Church of Christ were to admit the plaintiffs to the Lord's table, "this surely were to dishonour our sacred religion; and too naturally brings, not only Christian baptism, but Christianity itself, into manifest contempt."

The NINTH WITNESS has detained you, Gentlemen, a greater length of time than any of the other Witnesses; yet after all his learned and toilsome disquisitions to prove that pouring water upon an infant is (he does not attempt to prove that sprinkling is) baptism; he is conscious that his arguments are controvertible, and that those of his opponents cannot be overthrown. Mark, therefore, the salvo he now applies to his conscience, for his disregard of the Lord's commandments! "Even (says he) if immersion was *in fact* the original mode of baptizing in the name of Christ, these reasons (the *exceeding harshness* of immersing, male and female, strong and feeble, in water) make it IMPROBABLE that no accommodation of the form should take place without vitiating the ordinance."

Notwithstanding that he has detained you so long, I shall not think it necessary to occupy any great length of time in following him throughout his tergiversations. I shall only bring again before you the following propositions as stated by him, conscious that the contradictions involved in them will be sufficient to invalidate his evidence.

"Baptism was expressly made the initiatory rite by which *believers* of all nations were to be introduced into the church and covenant of grace."

"Baptism is an initiation into, and acceptance of, the covenant of grace, required of us by Christ as a visible expression and acceptance of that faith in Him which he has made a condition of that salvation."

"The church of Christ, in its largest sense, consists of all who have been baptized in the name of Christ, and who thereby make a visible profession of faith in his divine mission, and in all the doctrines taught by him and his inspired apostles." "In a stricter sense, it consists of those who are vitally united to Christ, as the members of the body to the head; and who, being thus imbued with spiritual life, walk no longer after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

"It is obligatory on all who are convinced of the truth of Christianity, to be baptized."

"If baptism be the door of admission into the church, some must judge of the fitness of the candidates."

"The church is a SOCIETY FOUNDED UPON FAITH, and united by mutual love.—It cannot employ force; the ONLY DOOR of the church is FAITH, to which there can be no compulsion—he that 'BELIEVETH, AND IS BAPTIZED,' BECOMES A MEMBER."

The baptized "are BOUND to keep themselves separate from the world, except in the ordinary and courteous intercourse of life."

"The saving benefits of the covenant of grace are made expressly to depend upon a true faith."

"The obligation of baptism rests upon the example of our Lord, who by his apostles baptized many that by his discourses and miracles were brought to profess faith in him as the Messiah."

"By baptizing them that BELIEVE THE 'GOOD NEWS,' and ACCEPT the terms of the new covenant, are all nations now to be brought into the church of God."

"Baptism—is not a mere EXTERNAL ceremony, but a rite which DEMANDS or requires something of us—what that is we learn from the words of the Lord; it is faith in Christ. 'He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved.'"

"We know, from the instance of the Eunuch, that there was an explicit requirement of faith, and as explicit an answer or confession."

"Peter preserves the correspondence between the act of Noah, in preparing the ark, as an act of faith by which he

was justified, and the act of submitting to Christian baptism, which is also an ACT of faith in order to the remission of sins."

"Baptism is the outward sign of our entrance into God's covenant of mercy, and that when it is *an act of true faith, it becomes an instrument of salvation*; like that act of faith in Noah, who prepared an ark to the saving of his house."

"Baptism is made obligatory upon 'all nations to whom the gospel is preached,' and is 'to continue to' the end of the world."

"Baptism is OUR SEAL, by which we make OURSELVES parties to the covenant, and thus set to our seal that God is true."

In baptism—"we undergo a mystical death unto sin; a mystical separation from the world, which St. Paul calls being 'buried with Christ in or by baptism;' and a mystical resurrection to newness of life, through Christ's resurrection from the dead."

"Baptism is the grand initiatory act by which we enter into this covenant, in order to claim all its spiritual blessings, and to take upon OURSELVES all its obligations. It is the means by which men become Abraham's seed."

"Our Lord's baptism by his disciples was administered to THOSE JEWS THAT BELIEVED ON HIM as the Messiah; ALL of whom, like the apostles, waited for a fuller development of his character and offices."

"That believers—are the proper subjects of baptism—is beyond dispute."

"Faith in Christ is—an INDISPENSABLE CONDITION for baptism, in all persons of mature age.—Hence the administration of baptism was placed by our Lord ONLY in the hands of those that were to preach the gospel, and 'to teach them' to OBSERVE ALL THINGS whatsoever Christ had commanded them."

Now, Gentlemen, I appeal to you if any one of his twenty-two propositions can be made to quadrate with the sprinkling of an infant?—if all of them do not more or less accord with the baptism of a believer? and, consequently,

if his evidence is not decidedly in our favour? Is it not clear that his views of baptism are at variance with his practice, and opposed to his prejudices, which he permits to preponderate against the clearest evidence from the Will? He dare not assert that baptism was originally administered in any other way than as it is now administered by the defendants. Yet mark how he vilifies the sacred ordinance—how he proclaims his rancorous hatred of it as practised by the servants of, and as observed by, the Testator himself!—It is (says he) satisfactory to discover that all the attempts made to impose upon Christians a practice repulsive to the feelings, dangerous to the health, and offensive to delicacy, is destitute of all Scriptural authority, and of really primitive practice. To say that it figures our spiritual death and resurrection, has, we have seen, no authority from the texts used to prove it; and to make a sudden pop under water to be emblematical of burial, is as far fetched a conceit as any which adorns the Emblems of Quarles, without any portion of the ingenuity.”

At length, Gentlemen, we come to the TENTH (and last) WITNESS, whose evidence throughout was unbecoming that of a professed minister of the gospel; and does no credit to the cause it was brought to support. Indeed, I cannot conjecture what object the plaintiffs had in view in bringing him forward. All he attempts to prove is, that to immerse is not the sole meaning of the verb βαπτίζω when applied to the initiatory ordinance; as if this was the only point in dispute. But, Gentlemen, you require more than this. It must be proved to your satisfaction who are the proper subjects of baptism—to whom the ordinance ought to be administered, as well as the specific meaning of the word with reference to its administration.

We may gather from his evidence, that he volunteered his services on the ground that he felt himself hurt at having been personally alluded to, in a certain publication, as “a sinner above all that dwell” round him; when he “is only one of thousands who hold the principles” of pædobaptism. He told us that he preached nothing but what he was

solemnly bound by his ordination vows to declare. But he ought to have told us the nature of those vows, lest we should think them similar to the oaths of the Fourth Witness; or like those exacted by a northern church, which dismisses its ministers, not because they do not preach the gospel, but because they do not preach according to their ordination vows. Now, although the Witness in this respect has left us in the dark, we are authorized to declare, from the tenour of his evidence, which we may conclude is in accordance with that vow, that he bound himself to "teach for doctrines the commandments of men."

I shall pass over his elucidation of the verb βαπτίζω, as I shall hereafter have to give my opinion upon it. "Dipping (says he) is of such importance, according to their system, that there can be no Christian baptism unless the whole body be immersed in water." This, we are bold to confess, is our opinion: but note, Gentlemen, his inconsistency; for, after vilifying and ridiculing the ordinance as established by the Testator, in every possible way that his ingenuity could suggest, he told you that "pædobaptists (himself one) maintain that a person may have all that is essential to baptism, by being—dipped"! This is a strong statement; a candid acknowledgment that he bows to his opponents. The drift of his argument appears to me, not to prove that our baptism is not in accordance with the commission of the Testator, but to prove that sprinkling (which he calls baptism) is in accordance with it also.

He informed us, that "Though he had said that the word βαπτίζω neither signified dipping nor sprinkling, but that it left the mode of baptizing a matter of indifference; it would only have been saying, that Scripture does not expressly enjoin every thing respecting the worship of God and the administration of divine ordinances."

If the word does not mean either of these things, then we are both wrong; but it must mean something, and "there must be a choice of things, before it can be said to be indifferent which we choose." If there be no command for either, both are acts of will-worship. What, if it is not "enjoined

to dip people in a river, or in a baptistry, or in their own clothes, or in a linen gown," does this invalidate the command to baptize? In these matters we are left at liberty to act according to circumstances. But in regard to the ordinance itself, there is nothing left to choice. The Testator saw good to command his followers to observe it; and he himself set them the example.

"But, (said he) although they (his opponents) should suppose that *he* took a man in to the knees, or even to the loins, it would never prove that he went over the head. Nay, at this depth he might be sprinkled with fully as much ease as he could be dipped, and the *baptizer* would have this *advantage*, there would be no stooping in order to reach the water."

Gentlemen, what I have just stated, you have heard this Witness declare. And can you, or any one in the Court, suppose that he was serious, when he told you one advantage at least attended the going down into the water—it saved the minister the labour of stooping in order to dip his finger therein? Must you not rather conclude that his object evidently was, to display his wit at the expense of Divine truth? What are we to think of a man who can thus trifle with a sacred subject—a subject affecting the state of all mankind; even their eternal happiness, or never-ending misery.

"I only wonder (says he) how any person, who can examine the New Testament for himself, can be of these sentiments. And were it not for the *high respect* I have for many excellent and worthy men, who have adopted them, I should think it impossible for any thing but the MOST UNBLUSHING IGNORANCE to say this is the apostolical, the scriptural, and the ONLY mode of baptism."

He has told you, Gentlemen, that a person may have ALL that is essential to baptism, by being dipped. How then can he, with any propriety, charge us with unblushing ignorance for maintaining, that being immersed in water is the ONLY scriptural baptism; and that there is no other way by which any one can have all the essentials requisite thereto?

Whether in the eyes of others we be right or wrong, in thus administering the ordinance, it is for them to say; but we have the concurrent testimony of these Witnesses, that our conduct in this respect cannot be impugned. So that in this particular, if in no other, we are on safe ground; while that upon which they stand, to say the least of it, is untenable. Reconcile to yourselves, Gentlemen, if you be able, his discordant sentiments—his high respect for my clients, with his imputation to them of unblushing ignorance. How can a man, who has any jealousy for the honour of the Saviour of the world, view with complacency, and entertain a high respect for, those whose practice he holds up to ridicule, and whose gross and unblushing ignorance of the first principles of Christianity he thus exposes to public scorn? I must confess that, however I may esteem an individual for his general deportment as a member of society, I can entertain no respect for him, as a professor of the gospel, who can thus not only compromise his principles, but indulge in profane wit, in order to degrade the ordinance as established and practised by the Testator, whom he has the effrontery to call his Lord. The following is another specimen of his profanity.

“Alas, gentlemen, things grow worse and worse, the more you bring them to the test; and sure I am, if any thing could put a man or a *system* to the blush, it must be such MISERABLE MURDERING OF THE WORD OF GOD AS THIS. Can they really look these passages (Acts viii. 16; Acts xix. 5; 1 Cor. i. 14, 15) in the face, and say again that βαπτίζω naturally signifies to dip, and that εἰς naturally expresses the idea of into? If they can, there is only one thing more to be wondered at, and that is, how any man, with their sentiments, can maintain that there is *only one* mode of baptism. For though we were to say nothing about water, or sand, here they can prove from Scripture that there is one mode of baptism which consists in DIPPING INTO A NAME, another which consists of DIPPING INTO CHRIST, a third which consists of DIPPING INTO DEATH, and we find a fourth, which is performed by DIPPING INTO MOSES’ BODY.—Common and

conscious men (says he), deluded with the dogmas of dipping, never read of John baptizing in Jordan, or in Ænon, because there was much water there, but they immediately think every person who went to hear a sermon by the side of a river went over head. It never occurs to them that Judæa was a country parched with thirst."

Having given you this specimen of his profane manner of treating a divine subject, I shall merely observe, that if we are to give credit to the inspired testimony, he appears to be grossly ignorant of the former fertility of the Land of Promise. It was denominated by Him who made it, the "glory of all lands;"* a good land; a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills—a land—which drinketh water of the rain of heaven."†

"If (says he) my prejudices are not uncommonly strong, Scripture proof that dipping is the *only* mode of baptism, is as PITIFUL a cause as ever Scripture was brought to prove. This, however, would not be worth noticing, if the *pitiful proof* were not made to support a doctrine which unchurches almost the *whole world*. With our opponents, if there be *no dipping*, there is no baptism; if there be no baptism, there is no visible church membership. This *sweeping* doctrine, then, declares the visible Church of Christ is confined to those who are dipt. All else, though as eminent as an Harvey, a Henry, or an Owen, or any body else, are not so much as visible church members; and if they went to heaven, it was not through the medium of the visible church. This is an awful doctrine, and should not be supported by *slender* proof. Nothing but the clearest evidence should convince any man that a doctrine so UNCHRISTIAN could ever be countenanced by Christ."

The contemptuous manner in which he speaks of the ordinance of the Lord, detracts nothing from its importance; still, if his words be proved to be "idle words," the Scripture assures us that he "shall give account thereof in the day of judgment."‡ Having now exhausted his wit, he brings in a grave charge against my clients; nothing less

* Ezek. xx. 6.

† Deut. viii. 7, and xi. 11.

‡ Matt. xii. 36.

than the unchurching of all who neglect to conform to the standard laid down by the great Testator. What and if we are censured for maintaining inviolable what our Lord has committed to our trust, shall such a charge as this make us vary our conduct? No, it is our humble determination, through the influence of that Spirit which dictated the Will, to adhere to the plain, simple, and self-evident meaning of it; which meaning, where the Will is honestly translated into the language of any country, must be within the comprehension (through the divine teaching) of the unlettered people of that country: otherwise the poor would not have the gospel preached to them. Therefore there is no need of the learned researches to which our opponents have recourse, in order to determine what is the will of God concerning us. If by maintaining the word in its truth, such inferences are to be drawn as this Witness says must necessarily be, are we to be censured as being the cause of it? Their situation is that which they themselves have chosen. If we were to stand silently by, without warning them of their error, we might indeed merit their censure; but surely we are deserving of their praise for pointing it out to them, while there is "space for repentance." Gentlemen, it has been shown that the doctrine of our opponents rests upon slender proof, and that ours, with all their laborious endeavours, remains invulnerable. Before I sit down, I hope to convince you that the cause we advocate is founded upon the Rock of Ages, which shall endure throughout eternity.

Look, Gentlemen, into the Book of Common Prayer, and ask yourselves if the administration of what is there called baptism, does not bear sufficient proof that it is an invention and commandment of men. You are well aware that the Will contains no command for christening infants; no, nor yet any thing that can be legitimately construed into such a command: and we are lost in astonishment, when we look round us, and see that almost the whole world, denominated Christian, suffer themselves to be deluded by a thing so palpable, that the Word of God declares that "the way-faring men, though fools, shall not err therein."

Ask yourselves, Gentlemen, Could any well-informed heathen, on the Will being first put into his hands, who had before never heard of it, be made to believe that the Christian world act as if they thought the command of the Testator, "Go, teach all nations, baptizing them," can be so construed as to command the sprinkling of those who are incapable of being taught; and that the promise, "He that believeth, and is baptized," is applicable in any, the most distant way, to those who have no power of perception? And you will answer, No, the thing is impossible.

I am aware that this Witness does not christen a child according to the form used by the Church of England: but that makes little difference. The spirit of the act is the same, and it is equally unauthorized, not being in accordance with the Testator's commission. "Who hath required this at your hand?"*

This Witness says, that "if pædobaptists were NOT ABLE to prove their opinions CLEARLY, there would still be this to recommend them, that they are charitable ones."

The plea of charity, Gentlemen, is always suspicious when it dictates a policy that would decoy us from the narrow way which leadeth unto life, into the broad way that leadeth unto destruction. And wherefore serves this charity? Can our charity influence the judgment of the Most High? Can it be any benefit to our neighbour to make him believe that he will be saved, when we see him act in defiance of the declared will of the Testator? Does not a mistaken charity like this do him the greatest possible injury that man can do to his fellow man? Is it not a means of lulling his conscience to repose in an imaginary security, from which, if he "fall asleep" in it, he will awake to eternal misery?

And what is this charity of the Pædobaptists, Gentlemen? Is it not that for which the church at Thyatira was reprov'd, when it was said to her, "I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which *calleth* herself a prophetess, to teach, and to seduce my servants to

* Isa. i. 12.

commit fornication?"* "Even so do they likewise;" their charity suffers those who are dipt to believe "that they have all that is essential to baptism," and thus it encourages them in (what they call) error—an error, according to this Witness, of the grossest description: for he puts it to you to say, if it does not appear "that the sentiments of the Baptists are the DOCTRINES OF MEN—OPPOSED TO THE DECLARATIONS OF THE GREAT GOD." Can he be a true pastor, who thus leaves the people in error? and who, after denouncing the conduct of his opponents, and representing them as the enemies of God, (for in no other sense can they be viewed who teach for doctrines the commandments of men), will turn round, shake them by the hand, call them his Christian brethren, and then conclude the farce with this declaration, that if he and they (the pædobaptists) are not able to prove their opinions clearly, they are at least charitable ones. I leave you, Gentlemen, to set your own estimate on this species of charity; for my part, I view it in the light the Satyr did the old man in the fable.

He accuses the defendants of "a dastardly attempt to do with sprinkling what the persecutors did with the martyrs, when they clothed them with the skins of wild beasts that the dogs might worry them."

However the defendants may speak against the rite of sprinkling, they deprecate persecution in every form and degree; and they rejoice in the great goodness of the Lord towards themselves, and those who differ from them, that, in this happy land, we do not experience the horrors of this engine of Satan. But our opponents accuse us of imitating the example of the persecutors of the martyrs of old. Admitting the exactitude of the parallel, and only supposing that we think we have as good authority for our opinions as they think they have for theirs—have we not as good reason to accuse them of clothing us in skins, and exposing us to be worried to death in the same manner? Only call to mind, Gentlemen, the description which these Witnesses have given of our practice, and the appeals they have made, from time to time,

* Rev. ii. 20.

to the passions and prejudices of the people in this Court, and then say if this charge does not apply to themselves with greater propriety than to us.

But we do not admit the parallelism of the two cases; there is no resemblance between us and the people with whom our opponents would associate us. We put no garments upon them, neither coats of skins nor coats of mail. We only wish to point out that the clothing which they have assumed is not of that quality which will benefit them when most required. "Their webs shall not become garments, neither shall they cover themselves with their works."* We would therefore, with "fervent charity," counsel them (in the words of the Lord) to "buy—gold tried in the fire, that they may be rich; and white raiment that they may be clothed—that the shame of their nakedness do not appear."† Our object is not to expose them to death, but by timely precaution to preserve them from it.

This Witness told you, that "in Britain—the Bible is better understood than in any country in the known world." I have not the means of ascertaining the proportionate knowledge of the Scriptures which the people of this and other countries have acquired, or of instituting a comparison between them; still I am not disposed to question the accuracy of the statement. It is certain that the people of this nation have greater advantages in this respect than those of any other, and that they have greater facilities afforded them for knowing the will of God, as revealed in the Scriptures: yet we fear, notwithstanding the boast, that not very many attain to the true knowledge of them, even in these days of learning and illumination.

"And now (said he) what shall I say to the query of our opponents, who cry out, Can any pædobaptists furnish an answer that will not be in favour of immersion as the only proper mode of administering baptism?—Now (he says) "on their principles" (the practice in positive institutes must be regulated by what is expressly and implicitly noticed in the Scriptures of Truth) let them prove the doc-

* Isa. lix. 6.

† Rev. iii. 18.

trine of dipping, and they will do far better than they have ever yet done. *But let them remember* they will be expected to keep to the point, and furnish some evidence that they have read the Greek New Testament on the subject."

One of our poets has said, "A little learning is a dangerous thing." If the knowledge of languages were a monopoly, and engrossed by our opponent, we must here resign the contest, and at once concede to him the palm of victory, as we should be unable to meet him on equal terms. But, providentially for us, and the world at large, we are not left in this awful situation; for, however extensive his acquaintance with the original language of the Will may be, (and we will not question it, not being competent to the task; although, whenever we find a person boasting of his attainments, a suspicion is engendered that they are merely superficial;) we are sure that this knowledge is not confined to him only; but that there are many of his predecessors, and doubtless many of his contemporaries, in no wise inferior to him in this respect, who can help us in our emergency; so that we are not in the least dismayed by his confident challenge.

To illustrate the nature of the controversy as it now stands between us, I will introduce a Cherokee Indian, in conversation with a missionary of this gentleman's school. I will suppose the Indian to have listened attentively to the reading of the Scriptures by the missionaries; to have been an observant spectator of their manner of receiving converts; and, upon the whole, to be really an enlightened subject. And I will imagine him as thus addressing the missionary sent out to convert his nation to Christianity;

Indian. My dear brother, I have been much edified and instructed by that holy Book, which has been dictated by the Great Spirit, and sent by him (through the medium of your kind countrymen who live beyond the great waters) to teach us the knowledge of his will, that we may observe his laws. I have listened with great attention to your reading of that book; I have also heard others of your countrymen, and men of other countries, read the same things from the same

book, using exactly the same words, or words of similar import. But I have observed that many of you put different constructions upon these words, which to me is very surprising; for I find that the greater part of the book is adapted even to my weak understanding. I can easily comprehend its general design; which is to teach us what is our real interest, and thus to make us happy, both in this life, and that which is to come. I find, too, that we can attain to this only by the Great Spirit opening our hearts to understand the laws and precepts which he has given us in the Word. Now, my dear friend, I have learned, in the first place, that we are to repent of our wicked ways, and believe the gospel: and in the second, that when we do really repent and believe, we are to make an open declaration of this before our countrymen, to let them know that we have forsaken the wicked courses which we, like them, formerly led; and also to manifest our love and gratitude to the Great Spirit, for his mercy and loving-kindness towards us. These things, as I learn from that holy Book, we are to declare, by being publicly baptized in his name. I have heard you and others read, that the place where this ordinance was first administered was in a river, named Jordan—that the person who first baptized was on that account named the Baptist—and that in another part of the Book he is said to have been at another time baptizing in a certain place, because there was much water there. I have also heard you read of several individuals who are particularly mentioned as being baptized, as I suppose to be examples to us (one of them the Great Testator himself), where all the circumstances attending the ordinance are clearly detailed; such as going down into the water, being baptized, and then coming up again out of the water: and in the one peculiar instance just mentioned, the Great Spirit testified his entire approbation thereof, by a visible manifestation, and an audible voice from heaven. From all these particulars, so minutely expressed, it appears to my feeble understanding that baptism, as it was then practised, bore some resemblance to bathing with us; the baptized being put entirely under water. Now I have attended several

times to the ceremony of receiving converts from among our nation by you, and others of your countrymen, and have observed, in the manner which you in particular administer the ordinance, that you do not require "*much water*," a small cup-full being amply sufficient. Besides, I have noticed that you receive babes and little children, and perform the like ceremony upon them. Now I have not heard you, nor any other missionary, read in any part of that Book of little children being baptized. Indeed, I cannot comprehend how these little creatures can repent; nor, even if they could, what they have to repent of, seeing they have committed no fault, having, indeed, no knowledge of either good or evil. Nor do I see how they can believe, as they have no capacity to comprehend the subject to be believed. If you will not be angry, I will request of you to explain to me the reason why you depart from the simple rule laid down in the Good Book.

Missionary. My dear friend, I am never angry with the ignorant who are willing to be taught. But you, instead of seeking instruction from me, are perplexing yourself with subjects upon which you are not competent to reason. You appear to have a desire to be wiser than your teachers; but before you presume to argue with me on this important point,—for I perceive that that is your object,—I beg leave to tell you that you must first read the New Testament in Greek.

Indian. My dear brother, this is a very unsatisfactory answer to my simple question; and not such as I expected to receive from one whose professed office is to instruct us poor people. Instead of being upbraided in this manner, I hoped that you would have answered my question with the same simplicity and candour with which it was proposed.

Missionary. My friend, the simplicity of the question is that which occasions all the difficulty. For before I can, in this respect, assign a satisfactory reason for our conduct, to the conviction of your understanding, you must first qualify yourself by the study of languages, and then read, as we do, all the books that have been written by Jews, Pagans, and Christians—those of early as well as of later ages—

which give us an account of their manners and customs, their religious rites and ceremonies; and then you will be able to see that our conduct is perfectly agreeable to the examples they have left us. These we think it much more safe to follow, than the express directions given us in the book, which, however plain they may appear to your uninformed mind, are in fact quite the contrary; being vague, uncertain, ambiguous, and, without the aids that I have just mentioned, wholly unintelligible.

Indian. My brother, you have placed me in a painful situation. How is it possible for me to learn so many languages as would be requisite to enable me to read the books you mention. I have neither the means, nor the opportunity, nor the ability to acquire them. You are well aware that almost the whole of my time is taken up in hunting, whereby I obtain a precarious subsistence. But even if I had the books, and were able, and had time to read them, what would they profit me? I should have nothing to rely upon but mere human testimony, which the holy book commands me to reject. Is it not safer for us poor, unlettered Indians, to attend only to the instructions therein given us; which you and the other missionaries acknowledge to be dictated by the Great Spirit? These cannot possibly lead us into error, and for our encouragement he tells us that "the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant."* That they that seek knowledge as silver, shall find the knowledge of God; for "out of his mouth (only) cometh knowledge and understanding."† "He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation: and as for his judgments they have not known them."‡ The time is long since past when the knowledge of God was the peculiar privilege of a single nation. The holy book is now, as was promised by the Great Testator, and foretold by his prophets, sent to the nations that long lay in darkness; it has at length come even to us, and, as the book itself declares, is able to make us "wise unto salvation." It says, "my people shall

* Psa. xxv. 14.

† Prov. ii. 3—6.

‡ Psa. cxlvii. 19, 20.

know my name; therefore they shall know, in that day, that I am he that doth speak: behold it is I."* And having promised that his people should be fed with the finest of the wheat, "winnowed with the shovel and with the fan," it is a guarantee to us, that his providential care is constantly over his word, to preserve it pure, as originally dictated by the Great Spirit: and as, when it was first to be published to all the world, he endowed his messengers with the knowledge of tongues necessary for that purpose; so he now sends the same word, for the same purpose, to distant lands, written, by men qualified by his superintending providence, with a knowledge of the language of the countries to which it is sent. And where there are individuals whom he is pleased to bless with a disposition to receive it, those individuals will have it put into their hands in a language which they can understand. And as Isaiah prophesied, that "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea;"† so the Great Spirit will continue to send his word abroad until the prophecy shall be fulfilled. And surely my dear brother must know that the book is perfect in itself, or why the awful denunciations against every man that adds thereto or takes therefrom. This being the fact, then, should we not be very foolish to trouble ourselves with what others have said and done, either in the present age, or in ages long past, when every thing we can possibly stand in need of is in the book, made ready to our hand, and that in language plain, simple, harmonious, consistent, and demonstratively of divine original; suited to our every condition, state, and circumstances; containing all things necessary for salvation and eternal life—the infallible living testimony of the immutable God?

Missionary. This to such as you may appear very feasible; but I repeat my assertion, that before I shall deign to pay any attention to your statements, you must first give me evidence that you can read the Greek.

"For my style (says this Witness) I should make an apology. It is that in religious controversies of which my

* Isa. lii. 6.

† Isa. xi. 9.

own mind does not approve, but here I plead necessity. It appears necessary to suit our language to the callousness of some of our opponents, in order that our answers may be felt—and—Titus i. 10—13 seemed also to justify something of the kind, but I am sorry when there is occasion for such severity.”

We assure him, as far as regards ourselves, that we accept his apology with the greatest good nature; but some of his observations are so gross, that we can scarcely suppose the Court can, consistently with its dignity, follow our example. As for the force of his answers, or the intensity of the blows which he has dealt unto us, we are certain that they have injured himself more than they have injured us; through the whole combat we can affirm, with truth, that we never once perceived that he touched us; and although we have taken up a great portion of the time of the court in combat with him, it has not been so much to show the weakness of his arguments, as their folly and absurdity.

As for the amusing anecdote of the whale-fishery, with which he concludes his evidence, the moral may be applied with great propriety to himself and his colleagues. The only cause that can justify controversy, is the cause of truth; but it is manifest, from the whole tenour of their evidence, that with them it is a mere contest of words, or who shall have the ascendancy. For after having, as they would fain persuade themselves, obtained the victory over their opponents, and reviled them in no measured terms, they turn round and seek fellowship with them. And notwithstanding all they have said and done to their prejudice, they are *anxious* to stand high in their estimation, and to join in communion with them. Many of those who profess to view the ordinance of the Testator in a different light, we are sorry to say, so far forget themselves as to accept their proffered terms of peace, and compromise the doctrines of the gospel—they join “affinity with Ahab.”*

You are aware, Gentlemen, that this Witness (as well as several of the other) never once mentioned the second clause,

* 2 Chron. xviii. 1.

notwithstanding it is the principal one, and that upon which the trial is pending. What excuse can he make for so doing? Will he say he was ignorant that his evidence was required upon it? Or, that he does not understand it, and therefore excludes it from his creed? It is, Gentlemen, the only promise given by the Testator, whereby we are made heirs of the kingdom; and we can attain to it in no other way than by observing all things which the Testator commanded his disciples to teach. Until we believe and have been baptized, no work, however good in itself, or useful to our fellow-creatures, or honourable to ourselves, is of the least avail to our acceptance with God; for "without faith it is impossible to please him."* Any work previously done with that intention, is offering polluted bread upon his altar. To such, "saith the Lord of hosts, I have no pleasure in you—neither will I accept an offering at your hand."†

It is now a common practice for people to search the Will to find out how many things they may disregard as non-essentials, and still be saved, rather than diligently search for all that is required of them. With some individuals, baptism takes the lead among these non-essentials; although, after the Testator commissioned his disciples to baptize all nations, we have no reason to believe, from any thing declared in the Will, that any one individual was saved without it.

I shall here beg to remark, Gentlemen, in reply to the taunt of the last Witness, respecting the reading of the New Testament in Greek, that the Most High, in his wisdom, has seen good to raise up a number of learned men in latter times, to translate his Will into our tongue; and though some words have not been translated into the vernacular language, and that one in particular which is the subject of this trial, yet that word stands in numerous instances in such a connexion with other words, that no unprejudiced person, who searches the scriptures in the sincerity of his heart, can mistake its true meaning. Thus hath the All-Wise Creator been pleased to put every man upon a level who has the Bible in his hand and can read it; and he has given to each of them

* Heb. xi. 6.

† Mal. i. 7—10.

as good an opportunity of knowing what he teaches, as those had who heard the words from the lips of his well-beloved Son. Yea and a far greater opportunity than they had at that time; for they were not then able to bear them. But we, by the down-pouring of the Spirit, are, as they afterwards were, "guided into all truth." And we have no reason to imagine that, in our day, the Testator chooses men to teach his word on account of their earthly wisdom, any more than he did at the time he was upon the earth; for how few among the learned preach it according to "the simplicity that is in Christ."* The native language of the apostles was sufficient for them to teach their own countrymen. It was not until they were sent to teach all nations, that they were endowed by the Spirit with the faculty of speaking all languages, as necessary for the instruction of the nations to which they were sent. We, as the apostles were, are opposed to men of our own nation, whose much learning has drawn their minds from the simplicity of the Scriptures; who are "ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."† James asks, "Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and HEIRS TO THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN?" Surely, then, it is such poor, or unlettered men, who (by paying attention to the simple dictates of the Will, free from the prejudices of education principles,) are most likely to attain to the true understanding of it, and best able to explain it, and show unto you who are, and who are not, their fellow-heirs. I am far from depreciating the value of learning; when I make light of it, it is only to show its inefficiency, of itself, to communicate spiritual information.

Hear, Gentlemen, what the first Witness (a man learned as any that the present age has produced,) says; "It is worthy of remark, that in all the revivals of religion with which we are acquainted, God appears to have made very little use of human eloquence, even when possessed by pious men. 'Not with wisdom of words,' but by his own nervous truths, announced by *plain common sense*, though in *homely phrase*, have been the *general* means of conviction and con-

* 2 Cor. xi. 3.

† 2 Tim. iii. 7.

version of sinners. Human eloquence and learning have often been successfully employed in *defending the out works* of christianity, but simplicity and truth have *preserved the citadel.*"

Allow me *here* to state, what I announced my intention of stating *in my defence*, that the argument taken from the Abrahamic covenant in favour of infant baptism, is wholly insupportable. The administration of this rite to infants had doubtless another origin; but having come into use, that covenant was pleaded in its justification. Circumcision was founded on the promise that the natural seed of Abraham should inherit the promised land. Therefore, to sprinkle infants under the present dispensation, because the male infants of Israel were circumcised under the past, is to imply that his spiritual seed shall inherit "the purchased possession" after the same manner, *i. e.* being born after the flesh, and not after the Spirit.

To attempt to initiate infants (all of whom are born after the flesh) into the new covenant, by sprinkling them, is to attempt to change the entire nature of the covenant, and to assimilate it to the old. It is, in truth, to do what God has nowhere in his Word authorized us to do; and those who substitute infant sprinkling in the place of circumcision, show that they have discovered something, by the ingenuity of their deductive reasoning, which the Will does not reveal to them. Their deductions from the Abrahamic covenant are quite at variance with the whole tenour of the Will, and cannot be received in evidence.

'Circumcision,' Gentlemen, 'was annexed to a peculiar covenant of promise made with Abraham, which respected two future covenants, the old with his fleshly seed, and the new with his spiritual seed of all nations. But it was appropriated to the first of these covenants, which was temporal and typical, and accordingly was set aside with it. Whereas baptism pertains only to the new covenant, which is the antitype of the old. Circumcision was instituted for the male descendants of Abraham, their male servants, and slaves. Baptism was instituted for females as well as males, for Jew

and Greek, bond and free; in short, for all who "repent and believe the gospel." The circumcision made by hands in the flesh of Abraham's natural seed, prefigured the circumcision of the heart of his spiritual seed, the circumcision made without hands in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh. But baptism presupposes the subjects of it already circumcised in heart, and signifies their communion with, and conformity to Christ, in his death, burial, and resurrection.'

But our opponents say, that if we do not christen infants, now circumcision is abolished, we make the blessings of the new covenant more limited than were those of the old. We have, in the course of this trial, repeatedly asked this question, What advantage can the infant derive from christening, or from this new covenant, as it is called? Some of our opponents consider it of vital importance—the eternal welfare of the individual being dependent thereon; whilst others on the same side consider it as not affecting his future state, but merely as bringing him into covenant with God. Others again, that the advantages are on the side of the parent. While we have throughout endeavoured to show that no advantage, in any way, form, or degree, can result to the child—for there is not any thing which can be done by one individual for another, which can affect the eternal state of that individual, when he is not consenting thereto, or has no power of choice either to will, to do, or to suffer,—as is the case with infants. It may then be asked, Why were the male children of the Jews circumcised, as they were equally passive as the children of the present day? We are not bound to give any answer to this question, but that it was so commanded of the Lord; and when our opponents can show the same authority for their practice, we shall acknowledge the propriety of it, and require no proof of its utility. This authority not being forthcoming, our question is a legitimate one. I will nevertheless state some of the advantages resulting from it.

By circumcision the child was taken into covenant with the Lord's people, and entitled to a participation in all the privileges, blessings, and immunities of that dispensation.

He was permitted to eat of the sacrifices, to join in the worship of the temple, and to enjoy all the temporal favours which the Lord bound himself to confer upon that people if they continued in his covenant. The individual circumcised had the evidence of it in himself; he could not be deceived; he was not dependent upon others for the information necessary to entitle him to those important advantages. If he, in any country where the Jews had a synagogue, was refused admittance upon the supposed ground of disqualification from the neglect of circumcision, this could easily be overruled—he carried the evidence with him, which could not be controverted. Yet, after all, the privileges which the great body of them enjoyed were only of a temporal and ceremonial description—for, by attending to the outward ceremonies of the law (without entering into their spiritual design), they secured to themselves the temporal blessings of the covenant. But it was only through faith in the substance which these shadows represented, that any one of them could enjoy the salvation of God. Whoever was blessed with this faith, observed the ceremonies of the law with a feeling and understanding very different from the great mass of the nation.

As we are told that baptism came in the place of circumcision, I ask, What privileges do the infants of our opponents enjoy superior to those of ours—and how does the difference comport with the difference between the Jew and the Gentile of former times? The unchristened infant is, in this country at least, debarred from no temporal advantages; he can attend the preaching of the gospel wherever it is proclaimed—can read, study, and meditate in the word of God—and enjoy every privilege in common with his christened companion. In short, this circumstance alone makes no perceptible difference between them. Yet the latter is informed by some, that he has been taken into covenant with God, and by others, that by virtue of the rite administered unto him in his infancy he was regenerated, made a new creature, a child of God: while his companion, who is nothing behind him in moral attainments, continues a child of the devil. Here, in a matter of such incalculable importance, the only authority he can pro-

duce for this new birth, this spiritual life, so called, is that of some individuals who may have witnessed the performance of the rite (if any such can be found), or the parish register; but there are, doubtless, numerous cases in which unfortunate individuals can procure no evidence of their having been christened, from ignorance of the place of their birth, or otherwise. So that thousands (we may say without exaggeration,) have no evidence of their regeneration, but that of being born in a country where the rite generally prevails—they therefore can only conclude that some kind friends, though now unknown to them, did not, in their cases, neglect so important a ceremony.

But our children, Gentlemen, are not like those of our opponents, brought up with the idea that they were regenerated by any rite administered to them in their infancy; they are better instructed; and have a superior advantage, not only over those who were circumcised, but also over those who are now christened; for from their childhood they are taught to reverence the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make “them wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”* This is the only way by which they can “know the truth,” the truth that “shall make them free:” and when through the goodness of God they become free, and are “made heirs according to the hope of eternal life,”† they take upon themselves the profession of Christ, by being baptized in his name. Under the old dispensation, the Jews were commanded to circumcise those born after the flesh, the heirs of the land of Canaan; but we under the new are commanded to baptize those born after the Spirit, the “heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.” Herein, then, lies the great distinction between the two ordinances.

The Jewish church was a national church: and the whole nation, by a *formal* attention to outward rites and ceremonies, were equally entitled to all its privileges. Yet how few of them really understood the nature and design of the ceremonies, or received any spiritual advantage from them. “With many of them God was not well pleased: for they

* 2 Tim. iii. 15.

† Tit. iii. 7.

were *overthrown* in the wilderness.”* But the gospel church is a spiritual church, the members whereof are gathered in, one by one, according to the promise, “I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion.”† “These things will I do unto them (saith the Lord), and not *forsake* them.”‡

The plaintiffs’ witnesses speak as if they imagine that every proselyte who was circumcised after he had come to years of maturity was a believer. But this is contrary to fact; nor can they prove from the Will that this was the case in any instance, much less in every one. Yet they tell you that “it would have been a MONSTROUS PERVERSION of circumcision to have administered it to any person, being of adult age, who did not believe in the expected seed of Abraham.” What then? Are they wiser than God? He did not require them to believe; of this we have ample proof in the instance of Abraham, who, “in the self-same day” that the covenant was made, circumcised “all the MEN of his house, born in the house, and bought with money of the stranger.”§ The law by which a foreigner was made a Jewish citizen was plain and simple; it ran thus—“And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover to the Lord, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one that is born in the land—every man’s servant that is bought for money, when thou hast circumcised him, then shall he eat thereof.”||

Circumcision was not a sign of any moral change or disposition in the subject, as is clearly shown in the instances just mentioned. It was a ceremonial rite, preparatory to the individual partaking of the passover, in default of which he could not eat without subjecting himself to be cut off. But repentance and faith are required of every individual before he can be scripturally baptized. And every believer knows, from the whole tenour of the Will, that baptism is designed to show our personal and voluntary submission to all the laws of the Testator’s spiritual kingdom.

* 1 Cor. x. 5.

† Jer. iii. 14.

‡ Isa. xlii. 16.

§ Gen. xvii. 27.

|| Exod. xii. 48. 44.

The Witnesses assert or infer, that 'if it can be proved that the Old Testament contains sufficient precedent and information on' the point of infant sprinkling, 'whilst the New discovers nothing of an opposite tendency,' then may the testimony of revelation in its support be fairly pronounced unequivocal.

But why do they go at all to the Jewish church for a precedent; they came hither to prove that the rite of infant sprinkling is an ordinance of the Christian church, and they are bound to prove that it is so, not from the Old, but from the New Testament. It is only the supporters of such a cause 'who pass over the Evangelists, the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles, to search the book of Genesis, for instructions respecting the institutions of the Christian church;' and though we might be disposed to admit the authority produced even from the Book of Genesis, yet this is still wanting.

"In that he saith, a new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away."* 'The writings and Acts of the Apostles declare its entire abrogation, and proceed upon the fact that its shadows have been merged in the substance, and were never designed to be continued under the gospel dispensation. To adopt any peculiarity of an abrogated system, without a requirement to this effect, is unnatural, as well as unscriptural; and where no information regarding the matter is conveyed, to select according to our own pleasure some parts of a ritual, and declare it to be binding, whilst we reject other parts, is perfectly absurd. And it is equally so to say that we are to take the Jewish church, not as a model, but as a precedent.' When a general rule is acknowledged by two parties, one of which affirms that there is a certain exception to it, the *onus probandi* lies with that party, not with the party which denies it.

When our Lord had eaten for the last time of the paschal lamb, the celebration of the passover was to cease—the anti-type being about to be sacrificed; the type had nothing

* Heb. viii. 13.

further to indicate. And when He gave his commission to the apostles, 'that great sacrifice to which all others pointed, and in which they ended,' having been offered up, the rite of circumcision, with all the Jewish economy, was to cease. Therefore as when our Lord instituted the supper, he virtually abrogated the passover; so when he commanded his disciples to "go teach all nations, baptizing them," he virtually abrogated circumcision, and set infants free from all rites and ceremonies. Thenceforth his ministers were commanded to baptize all who believed the gospel; and every believer deems it his highest privilege to confess his faith in the ordinance which his Lord established for that express purpose.

Gentlemen, however much we are accused by the plaintiffs of a want of charity, I think they ought to allow that, so far at least as respects infants, the accusation is unjust; and I appeal to you and every one in the court, and ask, Which of the parties concerned in this trial manifests the greater portion of it—the defendants, who assert that our Lord's commission is addressed to such persons only as are of sufficient age to be capable of receiving instruction, but that all who die in infancy shall nevertheless be redeemed from the power of the grave, and restored to everlasting happiness, by virtue of their federal union to Christ, who has brought life and immortality to light;—or the plaintiffs, who by the tenour of their evidence endeavour to persuade you that baptism is essential to their salvation, that the omission of it, in consequence of the neglect or ignorance of their parents, subjects them to everlasting punishment?

Infants, Gentlemen, like the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda, are wholly helpless, and in every thing concerning themselves entirely passive; and as he remained unhealed of his natural infirmities for the want of some compassionate person to put him into the water, so according to them the former die unhealed of their ORIGINAL APOSTACY, unless some kind friend previously takes care to have them christened. What opinion can be more uncharitable than this? and what conduct can be more cruel than that of those, who, though

they maintain the infinite importance of this ceremony, yet refuse it to a child because it has not the good fortune to be born of parents whom they are pleased to denominate believers?

I am sure, Gentlemen, you will admit that the conclusion here drawn is the legitimate consequence of the sentiments avowed by the plaintiffs, and that it is no fiction of my own. I am certain that no one who holds such sentiments can really love that Being, who, they imagine, brings creatures into the world, and after a few hours, months, or years deprives them of their existence, and not only takes away their lives, but consigns them to eternal misery, not for any guilt or demerit of their own, but for a sin committed by another person nearly six thousand years ago, of which they are wholly unconscious; and that this must be the case with all who die in infancy, excepting a few privileged individuals, who happen to be born of parents of a particular class, who take the precaution to have a few drops of water sprinkled upon their faces previously to their departing this life. No one, I say, who really believes this, can love Him who thus acts towards his creatures, more especially as it is so contrary to that sense of justice which he has implanted in our breasts, and which he so forcibly inculcates in his Word. Well may He say to such, "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways."* "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"†

If any thing done to, or for, an innocent (in which sense it is viewed by its Maker,) could in any way give it a preference before another, the Lord would be a respecter of persons; and the children of the heathen, and of those who neglect to have them christened, must perish eternally for a sin which they never committed.

Having, as I supposed, Gentlemen, replied to all the arguments of my opponents, I find, by a reference to my notes, that there is one passage in the Will which I have overlooked, viz., that in Acts ii. 39; "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off,

* Isa. lv. 8.

† Gen. xviii. 25.

even as many as the Lord our God shall call." These words were spoken to the Jews, but had a reference to the Gentiles also, these being termed "afar off;" but the closing sentence shows at once the true meaning of the promise, "even as many as the Lord our God shall call." This promise was not made to the natural descendants of the Jewish, neither to those of the Gentile converts; that is, not to the infants (as such) of either people; as they can neither comprehend nor embrace the blessing. But it was made to all people and tongues, and to such of their descendants in every age, as are capable of understanding and receiving it; as it is written, "In every nation, he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."*

These words, "the promise is to you, and to your children," are interpreted by the plaintiffs' witnesses as implying that the promise is made to infants—and to infants of *believers* only, or, which is tantamount in their opinion, to the infants of GOOD MEN: but Peter's words convey no such meaning; he was addressing a mixed multitude, which he reproved in the following manner: "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you, by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know. Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, YE have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Yet it was to these men that he said, "Repent, and be baptized, every one of you;" to these very wicked men that he said, "the promise is to you, and to your children." "And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved." Thus the promise was then, is now, and shall be unto every believer, in every generation, so long as the world continues. The promise was the same, and made to the same characters, under the Old Testament dispensation; for it is said in Malachi, "Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall."†

* Acts x. 35.

† Mal. iv. 2.

I have now, Gentlemen, gone through the evidence, at least so much of it as bears upon the question; and I trust that I have shown to your satisfaction, that neither the arguments nor statements of the Witnesses derive any support from the Will. They have not brought forward one positive proof in favour of their cause, and the circumstances adduced by them, on which they lay the greatest stress, are neither conclusive nor convincing. In short, their whole system rests upon conjectural ground; it is built upon the sand. They are at variance with each other, and each with himself. I think my learned friend will feel ashamed of his Witnesses, for though he appeared confident at the first, he had, notwithstanding, some misgivings that they would break down; otherwise he would have said more in favour of his clients. I wonder that a man of his reputation should have taken up such an important cause, with nothing better to support him than the fallacious evidence which you have heard. But you and I, Gentlemen, are not surprised at what they have adduced; we were not expecting that any thing better could be found in favour of such a cause; indeed, we can scarcely imagine any thing too absurd for the plaintiffs to utter. I read the other day of a celebrated leader of a sect, second in regard to numbers only to one besides in this country, who, after he had preached during thirty years, wondered, when he looked back at all the incoherent stuff which he had uttered, that his hearers had not stoned him; and that after he had preached a number of years, he consulted a friend whether he should go on preaching, as he was *devoid of faith*. ‘Go on,’ said his friend, ‘to be sure; preach faith until you have faith, and when you have it, you will be sure to preach it.’

You will please to remember, Gentlemen, that there has scarcely been a passage brought forward out of the Will by the Witnesses, on which any of them ventured a positive assertion, but what was in favour of my clients; and that all their statements in favour of the plaintiffs are either supported by PROBABILITIES and PRESUMPTIONS, or contingent upon some uncertainty or other. Also, that not one of them spoke in the language of appropriation; nor showed any pretension

to the bequeathed inheritance. They have given you no reason to imagine that any of them are so familiar with the Will as to be able to find his own name written in it. Nay, it has been affirmed that two of them have expressed doubts of the justice of their claim, and of their eternal salvation; while the numerous contradictory statements, and the confusion displayed throughout the whole of their evidence, show that their system is founded in error; and that, as a body, they neither fully appreciate the provisions of the Will, nor truly understand it.

Allow me to remark, Gentlemen, before I enter upon my defence, that although I have made it appear, by my comments upon the unscriptural and conflicting evidence of the Witnesses, that the plaintiffs in their present state have no claim; yet I cannot look for your verdict unless I show our title to be as clear as I have shown that of our opponents to be defective. This I am bound to do, and trust that, through the divine blessing, I shall be able so to establish it, as will not only justify your verdict, but make that verdict unquestionable. If our title depended upon the mere testimony of men, I might here close our case, and demand your verdict,—so far at least as our attention to the ordinance in question is concerned,—and that upon the following evidence given in favour of my clients by their most violent opposers, the plaintiffs' own Witnesses, all of whom admit that immersion is baptism, and that we have been scripturally baptized. In addition to which,

The FIRST says, that "it is probable that those who were baptized in Ænon put themselves UNDER WATER."

That "the three thousand on the day of Pentecost were all *converted* and *baptized*."

That, "the Eunuch probably PLUNGED himself."

That "to be baptized in the name of the Lord (speaking of Cornelius and his house) implied the taking upon them the public profession of Christianity, and believing on Christ Jesus as their Saviour."

That "the jailer, and ALL his house, were baptized in consequence of their faith."

That "Stephanas, and his house, were probably CONVERTED and baptized by the apostle himself."

That "Lydia, and her WHOLE family, were baptized in faith."

That "here they receive baptism as an emblem of death (speaking upon 1 Cor. xv. 29) by VOLUNTARILY GOING UNDER THE WATER: so they receive it as an emblem of the resurrection unto eternal life in coming UP OUT OF the water."

The SECOND, that "the Eunuch went down INTO THE WATER, AND WAS BAPTIZED by Philip."

That "Stephanas and HIS HOUSE were CONVERTED to Christianity."

That "their passage seemed to be buried in the waters (speaking upon 1 Cor. x. 1, 2), as persons in that age were PUT UNDER WATER when they were baptized."

That "there is *no doubt* but the apostle alludes, in Rom. vi. 3, to the putting persons UNDER WATER, and raising them again OUT OF the water."

The FOURTH, that "the SEVERAL persons belonging to the family of Stephanas were QUALIFIED for usefulness."

That "the church of Christ is within the ark. Into this ark men enter by faith; this *faith* Jews and Gentiles professed, *when by baptism* they were admitted into the Christian Church."

That "there is no proof of there being any children in Lydia's household."

The NINTH, that "the households of Cornelius, the jailer, Crispus, and Stephanas, are mentioned as HEARING and BELIEVING."

That "Noah's entering into the ark was the visible expression of his faith; and for this reason baptism is called by St. Peter the antitype of this transaction, the one answering the other as an external expression of faith."

The FIRST, SECOND, FIFTH, and NINTH say, that the apostles understood by their commission that they were to instruct their hearers before they baptized them.

The FIRST, SECOND, THIRD, and SIXTH say, that the

Testator instructed his disciples that they should be converted and become as little children.

The SECOND and FOURTH say, that Crispus and ALL his family were brought to BELIEVE.

This, Gentlemen, is good evidence in our favour, our enemies themselves being judges. But if the whole world were to allow our claim, that would be no proof that we were heirs of the kingdom; neither by our proving the plaintiffs to be wrong, do we prove ourselves to be right; nor does the mere abstaining from their absurd rites and ceremonies make us a whit more acceptable than our opponents; nor does the mere act of baptism make any difference between them and us. On the contrary, to be baptized, without believing 'to the saving of the soul,' is a greater mockery of the Almighty than infant sprinkling itself, as that is generally attended to without much thought on the part of the individuals acting therein. But we must suppose that few or none can go down into the water without giving it some thought, and in so much as they do so, they are the more guilty, as they sin more premeditatedly, and of consequence more presumptuously. By the Jewish law, atonement could be made for "the soul that sinneth ignorantly—but the soul that doeth aught presumptuously, the same reproacheth the Lord; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people."* Baptism is the most momentous thing that any man in the course of his life undertakes; it was made by the Testator the entrance into his church, whereby the believer is entitled to participate in all its privileges. Therefore, whoever presumes to enter this church without the previous qualification, the wedding garment, must take the awful consequence of his temerity, as set forth in our Lord's parable of the marriage dinner.

Seeing that these things are so, I am persuaded, Gentlemen, that nothing less than demonstrative proof from the Will itself, such as shall be able to guarantee your verdict to be irreversible, will satisfy either my clients or yourselves.

* Numb. xv. 28. 30.

DEFENCE.

GENTLEMEN, I now stand before you as the defender of this great and most important cause—great, inasmuch as it is the cause of God; and important, as it involves the eternal welfare of myself and my clients, with whom I identify myself. To be enabled, by the help of God, to establish an unalienable right and title to our heavenly patrimony—to be made instrumental in promoting His cause—in exposing error and superstition, and divesting them of the mask of righteousness which they have falsely assumed, will be an honour, in comparison of which I shall deem all earthly honours as the “shadow that declineth.”

I have commented with great freedom upon the conduct of our opponents, and the evidence they have adduced. I have shown that their claims are erroneously founded; and I shall now proceed to show, with all clearness of speech, according to the ability which God shall give “unto me by the effectual working of his power,”* that the cause which we espouse is the cause of truth; and that the foundation upon which we are established is that “of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.”†

It has been shown that the doctrines and practices of our opponents are not in accordance with our views; but are in fact diametrically the reverse of what we esteem and observe. It is not possible, therefore, that we can both be standing upon a sure foundation, or that both can have a just claim to the heavenly bequest. One or other of us must fail in some most important points—points which will mar our title. This is a serious and awful consideration; it requires the deepest searching of heart and life, and the most scrutinizing examination of our respective claims, in order to

* Eph. iii. 7.

† Eph. ii. 20.

ascertain, beyond the possibility of doubt, that our tenure is safe—our building secure, such as will stand the severest test, the fire that is to try every man's work of what sort it is.*

My first object will be, briefly to state the provisions of the Will, and describe the characteristics of the true heirs.

The commission given by the Great Testator to his apostles, (whom he was pleased most condescendingly to denominate his friends; who were his companions during his personal ministry, who, he said, "continued with him in his temptation," and whom he appointed his successors after his ascension; who were fully instructed into all things relating unto his kingdom;) is summed up in these few words, "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." To which he added the comforting assurance of his abiding presence; "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

This is the substance of the requisitions of the Will; and the true heirs are those who conform to its precepts—"who turn not from it to the right hand or to the left."† "These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth."‡

I shall now endeavour to elucidate these provisions of the Will, and set them forth more minutely, and in detail. The apostles were sent to teach or disciple all nations; and every individual, of every nation, who should receive their testimony concerning their glorified Lord, they were commanded to baptize in his name. Afterwards, they were more fully to instruct those whom they had thus baptized, into all the laws, ordinances, and institutions of his kingdom. On them who received this testimony, believed it with all the heart, and professed their faith in the ordinance of baptism, a blessing was pronounced—"He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved;" and a malediction denounced upon them who rejected it—"He that believeth not shall be damned."

* 1 Cor. iii. 13.

† Jos. i. 7.

‡ Rev. xiv. 4.

Here, then, it is manifest from the Will, that before one step can be taken towards the heavenly inheritance, we must be the subjects of a teachable disposition, have arrived to years capable of understanding, of receiving, and of believing the message brought to our ears; and that, having heard with attention, comprehended (through the divine teaching) the nature and import of the message, embraced it with affection, and received it by faith, with all the powers of the soul, into the understanding, we are to confess and make an open declaration of our faith before the world, by being baptized in water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; or, as it is elsewhere expressed in the Will, "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

"Gentlemen, you have heard the arguments of the parties on the other side. And now I appeal to your candour and good understanding to say, whether the statements I have just made be not in exact accordance with the tenour of the Will—the plain, simple deduction to be drawn from it; and whether, if we would divest our minds of all previously conceived opinions, and of the practices built thereon, and view its simple and plain declarations without bias or prejudice, we could possibly arrive at any other conclusion?

Faith, then, manifested by a scriptural walk and conversation in the ways of God, is the first thing that can enable us to lay any claim to the inheritance; and the first advance towards the establishment thereof, is to confess the Lord in the ordinance of his house. By the observance of this rule only can we by any means show an indubitable title to the inheritance.

Thus you see, Gentlemen, that if we act in accordance with the Will, faith must precede baptism, and baptism succeed to faith; it is manifest, therefore, that at the very threshold of the door into the heavenly kingdom, the plaintiffs have taken a false step.

That faith is a necessary and absolute qualification for the ordinance, may be proved from several passages of the Will.

When the Pharisees came to John, he addressed them as a generation of vipers—inquiring who had warned them to flee from the wrath to come; adding these words, “Bring forth, therefore, fruits meet for repentance,” &c.* hereby pointing out the necessity of manifesting a meek and lowly disposition to receive his testimony, that he came to prepare the way before the Great Messiah, who should come after him to baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire. This their pride would not suffer them to receive; they “rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him.”† But “he that hath received his testimony, hath set to his seal that God is true.”‡ Peter said, “Repent, and be baptized, every one of you”—believe in him whom you have hitherto rejected. “Then they that gladly received his word were baptized.” And “when they believed Philip—they were baptized, both men and women.” “Simon himself believed also; and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip.”§ His faith, however, was spurious; it nevertheless appears that a profession of faith in Christ was required before he could be received into the church. To the Ethiopian Eunuch Philip said, “If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest; and he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God;—and he baptized him.” We could multiply instances to the same effect, but these are sufficient to show that a profession of faith was made previously to the administration of baptism, although that faith, as we have seen, was not in every instance genuine; but without doubt the evangelist believed that Simon’s was sincere, or he would not have baptized him. God only “knoweth the secrets of the heart.”||

We are next commanded to be baptized. Of the necessity of attending to this ordinance, I might adduce numerous arguments (some of them valid) from the evidence of my opponents; but, as I have before shown that almost in every particular that evidence is not to be relied upon, I shall not avail myself of it in any instance; nor of any thing which

* Matt. iii. 8, 9.

† Luke vii. 30.

‡ John iii. 33.

§ Acts viii. 12, 13.

|| Ps. xlv. 21.

they have advanced or admitted favourable to our cause ; but proceed to prove the necessity of observing this ordinance from the plain declarations of the Will.

The first account which we have of the institution of baptism (taking the books in the order in which they stand in the New Testament) is in the third chapter of the Gospel of Matthew. "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he, &c. Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judæa, &c.—and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins." The same circumstance is recorded in the third of Luke. "The word of God came unto John—in the wilderness.—And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins."—That this is the first time that baptism is mentioned in the Scriptures as an initiatory ordinance into a profession of divine truth, is manifest—First, from the appellation given to John, who is emphatically called *THE BAPTIST*; Secondly, from the question which the Pharisees put to him, "Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ?" &c. And, Thirdly, from John's own testimony respecting himself, and the object of his ministration—"that he should be made manifest in Israel; therefore am I come baptizing with water."*

We will examine each of these propositions more particularly.

1. If baptism, in the sense before mentioned, were a rite common amongst the Jews upon receiving converts (as some of our opponents insist that it was), why should John be denominated *The Baptist*? Would not every individual who received a convert by this ordinance be equally entitled to the appellation? And, moreover, if it were a regular, habitual mode, why should it have excited any surprise, or have led to any inquiry? Or why should he have been so denominated in contradistinction from all who preceded him? The ministers of religion of the present day are not, in general, called Baptists, though they all profess to baptize.

* John i. 31.

And wherefore? Because there is nothing remarkable in their conduct, they all receive their members in infancy (or occasionally at a mature age) after the same manner; therefore there is nothing to call forth remark; and if an enthusiast were now to arise,—of which we have had instances of late years,—and draw thousands of disciples after him, making no alteration in the mode of receiving them, would he be called a Baptist? No. But there is a class of professors of the Christian name who are thus denominated. And why? Because in this respect they deviate from the beaten track, not choosing to follow the commonly observed practice, but tread in the steps of him who first received the appellation of the Baptist. They are therefore a distinct people, and receive that distinctive name. Our opponents, by way of reproach, occasionally call us dippers — immersionists; and a certain party will class us sometimes with Socinians; Jews, and Infidels. If there had not been this distinction in the practice, the term Baptist would not now be heard among the professors of Christianity.

2. The question proposed by the Pharisees, Why baptizest thou, then? This at once shows that the institution was then new to them; for the singularity of the ordinance by which John received his disciples, caused the Pharisees to inquire who he was that introduced this innovation. Art thou the Christ? No. Art thou that prophet? No. Art thou Elias? No. Why baptizest thou, then? Why dost thou introduce a new custom among us? Hereby plainly intimating that they were then expecting the appearance of the Great Prophet that Moses foretold should come, to whom every man should hearken, and who would introduce new laws, ordinances, and observances, by which his disciples should be distinguished. Further, our Lord's question to the chief priests corroborates this fact. "The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men?" Was it a divine institution, of heavenly original, or was it the mere invention of men? This question placed them in a dilemma; they were afraid to answer it. The people knew that John was a prophet; they came to his baptism, as to a divine

institution; and the captious Pharisees knew that if they denied this, they should be in danger of being stoned: while if they confessed it they would confound themselves, being well aware that He would tax them with unbelief and hardness of heart. They therefore evaded the answer by a direct falsehood, saying, "We cannot tell."

3. John's testimony of himself, "Therefore am I come baptizing with water—that HE should be made manifest to Israel." We read of the prophet Ezekiel being beside "the river of Chebar," but no mention is made of his baptizing in it. But John chose the neighbourhood of Jordan for the place of his ministry, for the convenience it afforded for the administration of the ordinance; declaring that he baptized with water to repentance, but that He who should come after him should baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire; of which John's baptism was a figure. This is confirmed by our Lord's testimony; another proof of its being a new institution. "John (he says) truly baptized with water;"*—"And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John."† Paul further confirms this, in his exhortation to the Jews; "When John had FIRST preached before his coming *the baptism of repentance*, to all the people of Israel."‡ And Peter also, in his address to Cornelius and his house; "That word I say ye know, which was published throughout all Judæa, and began from Galilee *after the baptism* which John preached."§

This then will serve to confute the appeals made by our opponents to the writings of Jewish Rabbies, and to Heathen authorities, to prove that baptism was not a Christian institution, but an old custom that had long prevailed among both Jews and Gentiles, the professed worshippers of God, as well as the manifest worshippers of the devil. I feel ashamed of even noticing such authorities; and the Witnesses, by quoting them, show not only the straits to which they are reduced, but the tottering state of the cause that requires such unconstitutional support.

* Acts i. 5.

† Luke vii. 29.

‡ Acts xiii. 24.

§ Acts x. 37.

The ordinance here spoken of is that of John the Baptist, by which all who received his testimony respecting the Messiah (who was then shortly to be manifested) declared their faith in his divine mission. The same baptism was sanctioned by the Testator, at the time that "a voice from heaven declared, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased:"* the same by which his disciples first made their public declaration of their faith in him, as "the Christ of God:" the same which the Testator commissioned his disciples to observe: and, from the uniform practice of the apostles, we are scripturally authorized to assert, that by the same baptism ALL will glorify him, who receive the truth under the guidance of the Spirit of God, and believe to "the saving of the soul."

I have stated that we are commanded to be baptized. The command is explicit—"Go, teach all nations, baptizing them," &c. This is from the lips of the Testator himself. Peter said to the Jews, "Repent, and be baptized, every one of you." Again, it is said of the same apostle; "He commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord."† Again, Ananias said to Paul, "And now, why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized."‡

One would think there is sufficient here to induce every individual, who professes the slightest regard for the commands of the Testator, to attend to his ordinance; and it would appear impossible for any one, who had not heard the evidence adduced by the Witnesses, to suppose that men could come to any other conclusion. But we have seen that there are those, who not only violate this positive command, but treat it with contempt, and teach others to condemn it also; and that the very men who do and teach these things, profess at the same time to reverence the authority of the Testator.

It is declared in the Will, that the Lord Jesus himself, before he took upon him the public ministry, was baptized of John; as it is said, "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbade

* Matt. iii. 17.

† Acts x. 48.

‡ Acts xxii. 16.

him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now; for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.* How, then, can men treat that as a "TRIFLING MATTER," "a THING OF INDIFFERENCE," which the Testator himself has established by his own observance, and at the same time stated that it was "to fulfil all righteousness?" If He, who alone is perfection, could not go forth to declare his Father's will without previously qualifying himself by attending to this divine ordinance, shall we, his feeble worms, presume to call his command in question, despise the example he has set us, and declare that it is not only not necessary, but that to attend to it is a superstitious act? I leave it to the consciences of our opponents to answer this question; and to say if their conduct in this respect does not place them under the denunciation of the Lord, who declared that "they that despise him shall be lightly esteemed." †

We will now inquire into the conduct of those, who were unquestionably the followers of the Lord, who observed his commands, and did the things which pleased him.

According to the Evangelists, those who received the ministry of the Testator were, after his example, baptized. The Evangelist states, "when therefore the Lord knew how that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John (though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples)." ‡ Again, that the Jews said to John the Baptist, "Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan,—the same baptizeth, and all men come unto him." § We see by these passages what was the practice with regard to baptism during our Lord's personal ministry. We shall next inquire what it was after his ascension. Upon the preaching of the apostles, many of the Jews, being pricked in the heart, came to them and said, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Peter replied, "Repent, and be baptized, every one of you—for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Again, "they that gladly received his

* Matt. iii. 13—15.

† 1 Sam. ii. 30.

‡ John iv. 1, 2.

§ John iii. 26.

word were baptized.”* Again, “when they believed Philip, preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, they were baptized, both men and women.”† Again, when Philip preached Jesus to the Ethiopian Eunuch, “as they went on their way they came unto a certain water: and the Eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?”—intimating thereby that he had been instructed by Philip into the true character of Jesus, and the nature of the kingdom which he came to establish; the first step into which must be made by a public confession of faith, in the ordinance of baptism;—“Philip saith to him, If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest.”‡ After the Eunuch had made a satisfactory confession of his faith, the apostle immediately baptized him. Again, as Saul journeyed, breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples, “suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven—and he heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?—he, trembling and astonished, said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.—And Ananias entered into the house, and putting his hands on him, said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized.”§

Then we have the case of Cornelius, a devout man, one that feared God with all his house, seeing in a vision an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius. And when he looked on him he was afraid, and said, What is it Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God; and now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter.—And on the morrow Peter went away with them, and while he was instructing Cornelius and his household, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. “Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water, that these

* Acts ii. 38. 41. † Acts viii. 12. ‡ Acts viii. 36, 37. § Acts ix. 1. 18.

should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we. And he commanded them to be baptized.”* Again, the Philippian jailer “came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.—and they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to ALL that were in his house—and (he) was baptized, he and all his straightway. And he set meat before them, and rejoiced, *believing in God with all his house.*”† Again, “Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord (*with all his house*), and was baptized by Paul; and many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed, and were baptized.”‡ Next we have Paul saying to certain disciples at Ephesus, “John baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.”§

Hence we perceive the nature of the command given by our Lord to his followers; how it was understood by them; and how they and all to whom it was published regarded it, by their cheerful obedience and exact conformity to it.

But it may now be inquired, What is baptism? or what is it to be baptized?

As far as regards the simple act of being put under water, if the Will had been originally published in our native language, such a question as this would probably occasion much surprise; and although now, through the kind providence of the Testator, we have the Will faithfully translated into our mother tongue, yet our translators, in obedience to the direction given them, retained some few words in the original language, declining them according to the English idiom—the word baptize being one. It may be a subject of inquiry why they were retained—their retention has occasioned much misconception; and it will be fresh in your memories how much of the time of this Court has been consumed, and your patience exercised, by various opinions

* Acts x. 47, 48. † Acts xvi. 29—34. ‡ Acts xviii. 8. § Acts xix. 4, 5.

on this one topic. If the word had been translated, it is more than probable that, among English readers at least, there would have been no dispute concerning its import.

But as this word has been left in the original language of the New Testament, we will appeal to the learned for its literal meaning; and as I draw all my information from the writings of those whose practice is at variance with my own, their authority must, on this subject at least, be allowed to be valid, even though it favours our cause. The works which I shall first bring forward, being purely literary, are not liable to the objections which might be made against those of a religious character.

1. βαπτίζω—mergo, lavo.—*Schrevelius*.

2. βαπτίζω, from βαπτω—to dip. To immerse, to plunge in water.—*Parkhurst*.

3. βαπτίζω—I plunge. Plunge in water. Dip. Baptize. (John iv. 2.) Plunge in sleep—bury—overwhelm.—*Jones*.

4. βαπτίζω—to immerse repeatedly in a liquid—to submerge—to soak thoroughly.—*Donnegan*.

5. βαπτίζω—its primary signification, I cover with water, or some other fluid—I plunge into, or completely under water.—*Ewing*.

Here are five authorities, three of them I believe now living, all of whom give immersion as the primary signification of the word; and you will observe, Gentlemen, that the last author quoted is one of the Witnesses who has appeared in Court to give evidence against my clients. It is very remarkable, that though he gives immersion as the primary meaning of the word in question, yet he carries his polemics with him into his dictionary (an octavo), and occupies six to eight columns of it with a dissertation upon this one word, Baptism, to make it appear that it may be tortured to a different meaning in those passages of Scripture where it is used. Such is the force of prejudice!

In addition to these, I could bring forward numerous other Pædobaptist authors, who support this primary signification of the word. But it would be useless, Gentlemen, to take up your time by enumerating names.

Look to the “Ministration of public baptism, to be used in the Church of England,” as it now stands in the Book of Common Prayer; which book was revised and reformed at four different periods, by the most learned Pædobaptists of the day—by Archbishops, Bishops, Deans, and Ministers of State; and it is particularly mentioned, that in the reign of Edward Sixth it was ordered, by a statute in Parliament, that it should be *faithfully* and *godlily* perused, explained, and MADE PERFECT; yet the office of public baptism, which peremptorily requires the priest to DIP the child (if it can endure it) in water, remained untouched; an evident proof that all the learned men who revised the Prayer Book attached the same meaning to the word baptize as those did who first translated the book; *i. e.* that it means to dip the whole body.

But this is not all; the same prayer-book, Gentlemen, in which the word baptize is translated to dip, passed both houses of convocation, was subscribed by the bishops and clergy, was ratified by act of parliament, and received the royal assent. Here, then, we have the represented sense of the whole body of the realm of England, publicly declaring that the primary meaning of the word is to dip. Yet mark the inconsistency of our opponents! they revile us in every possible way, and bring us into this court, charging us with assigning to the word a sense and meaning for which there is no authority, when they themselves not only give it the very same meaning, but declare upon oath that they believe it to be its true meaning, and bind themselves to administer the ordinance accordingly. What, then, are we to think of an establishment whose governors or rulers make all their subordinates subscribe to all that the book contains; who make them promise to teach and practise by no other rule; who make them all solemnly declare, sealing their declaration with the Lord’s supper, that they are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon themselves the office of a minister; and yet permit, and for centuries have permitted, all of them to set this their solemn engagement at defiance, by sprinkling children, instead of dipping them?

But it may be replied, that all our opponents do not subscribe to these rules — that they show that they do not by professing to dissent from them. It is true, Gentlemen, they do dissent; but it would be an easy matter to name authors who are regarded as leaders by one, or other, and perhaps by all the parties who are opposed to us in this trial, who give precisely the same meaning to the word. Nor is this all, for you yourselves have heard, in the course of the trial, that *every one* of the witnesses has, at one time or other, admitted that to dip, to immerse, to plunge, is the primary meaning of the word βαπτίζω.

I shall here venture just to mention the authority of a modern author,* who has, with great learning and ability proved, to my mind at least most incontrovertibly, that the word signifies to dip, to immerse; that these words only express its true meaning when rendered into English; and that where it is used figuratively, it still retains this meaning, and in such instances is taken hyperbolically. But this authority cannot be expected to have any weight with our opponents, as the author writes against their cause.

We see, then, from these undoubted authorities, that the primary and literal meaning of the word baptize is, to immerse, to dip, to plunge; (every one knows, that in all legal documents each word is to be taken according to its simple grammatical meaning, unless otherwise declared by its connexion;) and that this meaning is further confirmed by its connexion with other words, and the circumstances stated in the various passages in the Will where it is used, as expressing the initiatory ordinance into a profession of the gospel. I appeal exclusively to our English translation; and as that was made by pædobaptists, they could be under no influence to make use of words, in opposition to their own opinions and practices, to favour those who differed from them. I therefore consider all the attempts of more modern writers to give the words a signification different from that which they naturally bear, as they now stand in the English text, as a feeble endeavour to support a tottering cause; an

* Alexander Carson, A. M.

endeavour which gives us a mean opinion of the candour of our opponents. We have great reason to thank our heavenly Father, that the translation of his word out of the original tongues was not confided to the care of men like these witnesses, wholly under the influence of prejudice, and who (if we may judge from the sample given us) would have grossly corrupted it, so that the unlearned, or those who like myself cannot read Greek, would never have been able, from such a translation as we should then have had, to come to a correct understanding of any part of the Will. For as, in their evidence, they have stretched their inventions to the utmost, in order to bewilder our understandings with respect to the meaning of one simple word, and this because it suited their peculiar views; so they would have done the same on every subject admitting of controversy,—and what subject is there on which all professors of the Christian religion, as it is called, are agreed? But the Testator, in his goodness, ordered it otherwise. He declared that his people should have the word transmitted to them pure and unsullied—that he would lead and guide them into a correct understanding of it; and to this end he provided that a company of honest men should be appointed to complete the work. This they did, and they have left us a FAITHFUL translation, which has stood the test of ages; and though it has been assailed by enemies of every class and description for upwards of two hundred years, no proof of incompetency, or inaccuracy, or partiality to sect or creed, can, with any show of justice, be alleged either against it or them, in any matter of the slightest importance: hence any appeals made from it to the original text shows that their cause stands in need of other than the express authority of the Will—something to be wrested from its simple and evident meaning, in order to blind the eyes of the unwary. In this, I am certain, every upright, honest mind, sincerely disposed to search after and to embrace the truth, will agree with me.

I shall now adduce those passages where baptism is said to have been administered; a comparison of which with the context will at the same time, even if we have been previ-

ously ignorant of the English signification of the word, leave us in no doubt whatever as to its literal meaning.

“And were baptized of him IN Jordan.”—Matt. iii. 6.

“And there went out to him all the land of Judæa, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him IN the RIVER OF JORDAN.”—Mark i. 5.

“Jesus was baptized of John IN Jordan.”—Mark i. 9.

“Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway OUT OF THE WATER.”—Matt. iii. 16.

“And they went down both INTO the water, both Philip and the Eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up OUT of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip.”—Acts viii. 38, 39.

“And John also was baptizing in Ænon—BECAUSE there was MUCH WATER there.”—John iii. 23.

Gentlemen, can any man of common understanding (and to such the Scriptures are addressed) put upon these passages of Scripture, and the connexion of these words, with the circumstances attending the administration of this ordinance, any other construction than that the individuals thus stated to have been baptized were put under water? Is it possible to conceive that the expressions, “were baptized IN Jordan,”—“IN THE RIVER of Jordan”—“went up OUT OF the water”—“because there was MUCH WATER there”—“they WENT DOWN BOTH INTO THE WATER, and he baptized him”—“when they were come up OUT OF the water,” mean no more than that the baptizer, in each of these instances, merely *dipped his fingers* in the water, and sprinkled a few drops of it upon the face of the person baptized? So decided is the conviction upon my mind, that I can no more question the former conclusion, nor admit the latter, than I can question my own existence; or that what I now behold with my eyes is an illusion. And this must invariably be the conviction of every man who will examine the subject with impartiality. Truth bears scrutiny.

Gentlemen, I have now proved from the Will that faith is required of every one who desires to be baptized;—that, being blessed with this faith, he is commanded to confess

his Lord in the ordinance of baptism;—that this ordinance cannot be truly administered otherwise than by the immersion of the whole body by an accredited minister of the Lord;—that to baptize any individual who has not a capacity to comprehend, or who, having the capacity, is nevertheless destitute of the previous qualification—faith; or to substitute any application of water other than that of immersion, is a departure from the orders laid down in the Divine Record, a violation of the command of, and a pouring of contempt upon, the great Testator. And although we are now under a dispensation, the characteristics of which are long-suffering, mercy, peace, and good-will towards men,—“for the Son of Man is not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them,”*—we are nevertheless assured, that those who disregard his commands, and do not submit to his authority, will assuredly perish—He will come “in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.”†

Baptism, then, having been proved to be a divine institution, an ordinance of the Christian dispensation, by the express command of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and that it cannot consequently be varied, altered, or neglected, without incurring his highest displeasure; I will now inquire into the design of it, and what instruction the Holy Spirit conveys by it to the minds of his faithful followers.

‘The allusions made to baptism, as the sign of a *burial* and *resurrection*, clearly point out the manner of its administration. Believers are said to be baptized into the death of Christ, to be *buried* with him by baptism, and therein also to be *risen* with him. Now, in whatever sense Christians are buried and risen with Christ, it cannot be *in baptism*, if there be no exhibition of a burial and resurrection in that ordinance; but if baptism is a burial in, and a resurrection from water, then the sign strikingly corresponds with the thing signified, and the allusion to it is pertinent and just:’ this I shall elucidate as follows.

‘Baptism is a representation of our putting on the Lord

* John ix. 56.

† 2 Thess. i. 8.

Jesus Christ; passing through the water in his name is a figure, and a profession of our passing away from all other things to Christ alone; it is to embrace him as our salvation, our life, and the fountain of all our blessedness; to comply cheerfully with whatsoever he is pleased to command, to lay upon us, or to do with us; and to acknowledge him in all things as our Lord and our God. "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."* Going down into the water, being a resemblance of death, is a figure of the dying of the Testator. Every one, therefore, that is indeed baptized in the name of Jesus, does in his baptism confess that he believes that the Testator did actually lay down his life. He also does thereby confess, that his heart is firmly persuaded that it was alone for sinners that Christ died; and that his death (being appointed of God for that end) was of perfect virtue to remove all sin, and to redeem us from the curse of the law.

'Being covered with water, is a resemblance of burial, and is intended as a representation of the burial of the Testator. And every one that is baptized in his name, does therein make confession of his burial, as being the finishing of sin; that it was their sins that brought him to the grave; that they believe all their sins are for ever extinguished in his grave; and being assured that they never more shall rise to their condemnation in the sight of God, they now look to Jesus alone for perfect righteousness, peace with God, and everlasting life. "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death."†

'Coming up out of the water, is a lively figure of the resurrection of the Lord of Glory; which resurrection, both as to the fact and the efficacy thereof, is so abundantly verified in the Will, that none can doubt it who pays a sincere regard to the Word of Truth. And every one that is indeed baptized in the name of Jesus, is baptized in the faith of his resurrection, "who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification."‡

'Baptism, being a figure of the death of Christ, is also a

* Gal. iii. 27.

† Rom. vi. 4.

‡ Rom. vi. 25.

figure of the believer's death to sin through the faith of Christ. For every believing soul is crucified with Christ. "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." So long as we remain without Christ, we are the servants of sin, the whole man is devoted to sin, pollution pervades every member, and our whole life is alienation from God. But when we receive Christ, we receive that holy principle which produces universal repentance, and which makes us dead to whatever our lives have been before.' "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." *

'As the burial of Christ is signified in baptism, so is the believer's burial with Christ signified therein. As sin was buried with Christ, no more to rise, so it is buried to all who believe, never more to live to condemn. I do not say that it never more vexes, disturbs, or grieves them; for the more they love God, the more their heart will loathe the appearance of sinful pollution. But I mean to say, that "sin shall not have dominion over them, for they are not under the law, but under grace." †

'As the resurrection of the Testator from under the punishment of our sins is figured in baptism, so our resurrection from the power of sin is shadowed in the same ordinance. "Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him." ‡ For whatever Christ performed for us, the same will he perform in us; "That like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." This is experienced by every one who truly believes in the resurrection of the Testator.

'As baptism is an immersion of the whole body, it is a proper similitude of the washing away of the whole of our sins from the soul. Ananias said to Saul, "And now why tarriest thou? arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." Saul having been a persecutor, and injurious, Ananias might speak of an exter-

* Rom. vi. 11.

† Rom. vi. 14.

‡ Rom. vi. 8.

nal clearing of himself in the sight of men. By a bold profession of Christ in the act of baptism, declaring his faith in the Son of God, openly manifesting submission to his will, and publicly confessing his name, he would wipe away the reproach of his former persecuting spirit. But this was not all that was intended; the disciples of Jesus are taught to trust in him for the purging away of all iniquity in the sight of God, which cannot be done by any external performance, for sin is in the conscience, where material water can have no influence, only as a visible sign, whereby we declare our faith in Christ Jesus, and ascribe glory "unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood." *

'In baptism is represented the translation of the children of God, from the power of darkness into the kingdom of the Son of God. Passing through the water, is an express figure of our passing from death unto life, from one kingdom to another, *i. e.* from the kingdom of Satan to the kingdom of Christ, from a life of enmity and alienation to a life of love, and peace, with God, which is the same with regeneration or being born of God.

'Baptism, by the Apostle Peter, when speaking of Noah and the souls that were saved with him, is called a figure of our salvation. Here the ark is represented as a figure, and baptism is represented as another figure of the same thing, namely, the salvation of God by Jesus Christ. The family of Noah, by first entering the ark, for a space, remaining in it, and then being brought out of it, enjoyed a real corporeal and temporal salvation, being carried out of the wretchedness of the old world, and introduced into the happiness of the new, which was a figure of the true, spiritual, and eternal salvation by Jesus Christ. So baptism, as it is a going down into the water, being covered with it, and coming up out of it, is a lively figure of this salvation. It is not the act of baptism, but the thing thereby signified, that is, "the resurrection of Jesus Christ," whereby we are saved. For the outward form passes only upon the body, whereas he tells us it is "not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the

* Rev. i. 5.

answer of a good conscience towards God;” * and there can be no good conscience but what is purified by faith, which the believer testifies in baptism.

‘There is also another figure, of like importance, which by way of allusion is called baptism; that is, the passing of the children of Israel under the cloud, and through the sea, whereby they were saved from the Egyptian bondage, and brought into full liberty under the immediate protection of God, which in itself was to them a real salvation; yet it was intended as a figure of the same thing that baptism is—a figure of our eternal salvation by the Son of God. Hence it is said of them, “And were all baptized unto Moses, in the cloud and in the sea.” Moses was a type of the Holy One that was to come, and by his hand they were led through those things which to them were shadows of the same grace and eternal salvation as baptism now is to us. Thus by faith the believer follows his Lord through the outward sign, in view of the living substance, by which he is brought out of a state of bondage and destruction, into a state of salvation, life, and peace.

‘Baptism in water is given to us as a lively figure of the precious promise of the Father, called “the baptism of the Holy Ghost;” this is the life and glory of the whole Will. This is the grand point to which the figure of water baptism is directed, for here the chief stress was laid by John the Baptist. “I, indeed, have baptized you with water, but He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.” He declared that this testimony he received from God. “He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.” And the Testator, before his ascension, said to his disciples, “John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.” † And when Peter had seen this gift of God poured on the Gentiles, he said, “Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water,

* 1 Pet. iii. 21.

† Acts i. 5.

but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.”* So then every man that receives the gospel, and is baptized according to the command of the Testator, is baptized in the faith of the promise of the Holy Ghost.”†

‘I have thus shown that the ordinance of baptism (which in itself is only an outward sign or shadow) is a most sacred appointment of the Lord, being a representation of things most great, most excellent, most glorious; clearly showing forth the fulness of the Testator, and peculiarly interesting to every believer.’ I have shewn, also, that it can only be attended to in due order, by putting the believer under water; that nothing less than this can, in the true sense of the word, be considered baptism; and that no other way of using water can be figurative of the objects thereby represented in so felicitous and lively a manner. ‘The pouring out of the Holy Spirit is called baptism, in allusion, not to the manner in which he is said to have been imparted, but to the plenitude or abundance in which the first Christian converts enjoyed his gifts and influences, insomuch that the minds of those on whom he descended were as fully’ enveloped in the glorious manifestation of his power, as their bodies had been previously enveloped in the element of water. Hence it is said by John, “I indeed baptize you with water, unto repentance; but he that cometh after me is mightier than I—He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.” Such is the figurative use so repeatedly made in the Will of the word baptize!

I am persuaded, Gentlemen, you will agree with me, that an ordinance commanded and appointed of God must be intended to answer some very important end—to set forth, in a lively and explicit manner, adapted to our senses, the blessings which he now graciously communicates, and has still in reserve, for his children. I am also persuaded that the view which we have taken of baptism, as a figurative ordinance, is plainly deducible from the Holy Scriptures, the sense of which is in nowise strained by fanciful conjectures. This, then, independently of every other proof, is sufficient to show the folly and absurdity, not

* Acts xi. 16.

† Acts ii. 38.

to say the sinfulness, of the human rite of infant sprinkling, or of sprinkling in any case, because it is no figure of those things which baptism so appropriately sets before us in the clearest manner.

Gentlemen, you have heard it argued by several of the Witnesses, that the ordinance of the Testator may, and ought to be, changed according to circumstances, and accommodated to the various manners and customs of the different parts of the earth: that even if it were not to be questioned (and we are confident they are in general sensible that it cannot be) that immersion universally prevailed in the early periods of Christianity, we, in this *refined* and *enlightened* age, are not to be governed by the conduct of those remote and barbarous times;—that we are not only justified in making, but are called upon to make, such changes in the administration of the ordinance of the Testator, as are accordant with *our* ideas of delicacy, modesty, and propriety; as well as to consult the ease, the comfort, the health, and the convenience of the parties concerned.

This, as we have before observed, is tantamount to calling in question the wisdom, goodness, and prescience of the Testator—to setting up our wisdom and prudence as superior to His. I need not make any remarks upon such presumptuous conduct—it must be manifest to the most thoughtless and superficial observer. The Lord declares, “I will be jealous for my holy name.”* “My glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.”† Hear how particular he was in times of old, when “every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward.”‡ Adam was forbidden to eat of the fruit of one particular tree; any thing less could not have been required, to have constituted him a responsible agent: he transgressed and fell; and the fatal consequences of his fall are still experienced. We must presume that Cain had equal advantage with Abel of knowing the will of God, and how he was to approach him by sacrifice; for he said to him, “If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well,

* Ezek. xxxix. 25.

† Isa. xlii. 8.

‡ Heb ii. 2.

sin lieth at thy door.”* Yet Cain, having known this, would not offer in the prescribed way, or, more properly, not in faith, but in a presumptuous and self-sufficient mind. Therefore to Cain, and to his offering, the Lord had no respect. The antediluvians had a revelation from God, and must have known his will; for we are told that Enoch walked with God more than three hundred years;† therefore they had his precepts and example for so long a time, and his translation proved to them that “he pleased God.” Yet in the course of time the people became so corrupt that there was found only *one preacher of righteousness* upon the whole earth. He, no doubt, warned the people all the time the ark was in building, and told them what would be the dreadful consequences of their rebellion, but all in vain—none would believe; consequently, all the inhabitants of the earth perished, except eight persons: and yet the majority of the people of the present time, with this awful visitation before their eyes, are living after the same manner, and imagine that all their evil doings will be pardoned, if they, in their worship, show only a feigned resemblance to the laws and ordinances of the Testator. From four to five hundred years afterwards, we find some of Noah’s descendants living in open rebellion against God, and in two large cities there was found only one righteous person; all the rest, with the exception of himself and his two daughters, were by the just judgment of God destroyed. His wife, though she escaped by timely flight the dreadful conflagration, yet looking back, contrary to the commandment, she brought upon herself the judgment of God, and perished by another stroke of his hand.

Moses, a man chosen of God, spoke unadvisedly with his lips, at the waters of Meribah, and because he believed him not, to sanctify him in the eyes of the children of Israel, he was not permitted to enter the promised land. This showed the Israelites that God was no respecter of persons, and that no one, no, not even his most distinguished and highly favoured minister, should with impunity deviate, in the slightest degree, from his commands. When the law was given from

* Gen. iv. 7.

† Gen. v. 22.

Mount Sinai, it was told the people, "if thou wilt make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone: for if thou lift up thy tool upon it thou hast polluted it." * The same command will apply to those who worship contrary to the revealed Will of the Testator; and whether they add to, or take from it, it is lifting up a tool thereon, and polluting it. Aaron and his sons were taken from among the children of Israel to minister unto the Lord in the priest's office, but only Aaron was to burn incense on the altar, and no strange incense was to be offered thereon. Yet Nadab and Abihu would perform the worship of God according to their own way, and in consequence were consumed by fire from the Lord. See how Moses, in the fourth of Deuteronomy, cautions the Israelites not to depart from the laws and ordinances of God. "Now therefore hearken, O Israel, unto the statutes and unto the judgments which I teach you, for to do them, that ye may live—ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God.—Keep, therefore, and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is *a wise and understanding people*.—Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life; but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons."

Uzzah and five thousand and seventy men were slain;—the former from an apparently laudable intention of preventing an accident happening to the ark; which shows how jealous the Almighty is of his prerogative—having given the ark to the care of the priests, none else might dare to touch it, not even to preserve it from apprehended destruction:—and the latter for looking into it; because they were not of those who were permitted to approach it. And thus they were made examples, as a warning to others not to infringe in any manner on the laws of God. When Saul became impatient,

* Exod. xx. 25.

waiting for Samuel, he took upon himself the office of priest, and offered the burnt-offering. But when Samuel came, he said to him, "What hast thou done?" Saul made his excuses, and received the following answer. "Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord thy God, which he commanded thee:" therefore "thy kingdom shall not continue."* And when this same Saul was sent to smite Amalek, he executed the commandment partially; yet in the vanity of his mind he said unto Samuel, "I have performed the commandment of the Lord. What meaneth then (replied the latter) this bleating of sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?" Saul said, "the *people* spared the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God." Samuel, to show the sinfulness of disobedience, even though it may be occasioned by a mistaken view of pleasing the Lord, thus answers him, "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king."† From these signal instances of the Divine displeasure, visited upon those who departed from the law of God under the old dispensation, we cannot think that he will hold those less guiltless who now, under the new, contemn his ordinances, and presume to set up rites and ceremonies of their own invention.

Notwithstanding these examples of the Lord's jealous care of the institutions of his own appointment, I shall doubtless be accused of attaching too much importance to baptism; but I have yet to learn how it is possible to attach an undue importance to the revelation of the will of Christ in this ordinance, which in every instance, except one, we read of as preceding the great new covenant blessing, the gift of the Holy Spirit; and even in this one instance, it immediately succeeded to it. Besides, we are told, that "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."‡ And the instance already cited is the only one upon record

* 1 Sam. xiii. 11—14.

† 1 Sam. xv.

‡ Rom. viii. 9.

where there was an open manifestation of the Spirit anterior to baptism.

Again, it may be said that I limit the mercy of the Almighty. This *I deny*; I do no more than state what I find plainly written in the Scriptures; and if there be any limitation found there, the limitation is of God: He has revealed his will in the plainest manner, both as it relates to the salvation of his sinful creatures, and to the way in which his salvation shall be experienced by them; and if they die as offenders against his law, refusing to attend to his gospel, He is just in leaving them to the consequences of their own devices. In what way, then, it may be asked, is the sinner brought to experience this salvation? His beloved Son answers the question; "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved." This, according to the Will, is the only way in which salvation can be enjoyed. And if any one put it from him until he is incapacitated to profess his faith in the appointed manner, the fault lies in himself, not in any limitation either in the goodness or mercy of God. As it is written, "that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest." *

But some persons say, "that there is not any positive command in Scripture to baptize believers—that whether baptized in a state of infancy, when adult, or NOT AT ALL, if we be believers in Christ, we shall be saved—that baptism is in NO RESPECT ESSENTIAL TO SALVATION." Others may say, that the commission given by the Testator to his apostles, and through them to all his faithful ministers, may not be of that importance which my clients attach to it, there being no enforcement of it, no obligation on the people to receive the message. To this the words of the apostle will be a sufficient answer. "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven." †

Again, I may be thought uncharitable, in entertaining an unfavourable opinion of the future state of those who die

* Psā. li. 4.

† Heb. xii. 25.

unbaptized, who never made a public profession of the name of Christ. But CHRISTIAN CHARITY, Gentlemen, consists in warning the living of their danger—of the fatal consequence of procrastination, that they do not “put far away the evil day;” lest they also depart this life in like manner, rejecting the invitation of the gospel, and be summoned, thus unprepared, before that great and awful tribunal from which there is no appeal. Our opinions cannot affect the state of the dead in any manner; but opinions which are unsupported by the Scriptures, and are nevertheless currently suffered to pass unrefuted, may be the means of lulling multitudes in carnal security, and thus facilitating their destruction.

Generally speaking, little or no reliance can be placed upon what are called death-bed professions. As the verbal confession is not ratified by the seal appointed by the Testator, the deed is rendered of very doubtful authority, if of any, and is consequently of no force; in fact, it is a mere nullity. For the confessions which are made under the apprehension of approaching dissolution, by men who all their previous life-time have neglected their salvation, not embracing the doctrine of Christ, may be considered as extorted from them by their fears; and almost in every instance of recovery it has been found that the individuals have relapsed into their former habitually heedless course of life. “They cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saved them out of their distresses;”* but “they soon forgot his works, they waited not for his counsel.”† There is nothing in the Scriptures to encourage any one to expect that they shall be called when brought to the verge of the grave—lying on their death-bed. A true and effectual confession of faith is made in baptism; when the heart is firm in the truth, and the individual in a composed, vigorous, healthy state of mind.

Some object that it is not said, He that is not baptized shall be damned. But the objection is puerile. Why should it be so said? The words are clear enough to satisfy any unprejudiced mind. They plainly import that a person must believe before he can be baptized; and that if he die in unbelief,

* Psa. cvii. 13.

† Psa. cvi. 13.

he will be condemned whether he has or has not been baptized.

When a believer—one who has given evidence of the sincerity of his faith, is about to depart this life, we are authorized by the Testator to say to him, as it was said to Daniel, “Go thou thy way till the end be, for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of thy days.”* But we have no authority to say the same to any who depart without confessing their faith in baptism, because they never made it manifest that they believed in Christ “to the saving of the soul,” or waited for the promise made to them that believe in him, and are baptized in his name. How far the promise is fulfilled in those who go hence unbaptized, is *uncertain* and *doubtful*, and the Scriptures afford us no ground for a favourable decision.

It is true, we have no reason to suppose that the thief on the cross had been baptized. Yet this one instance of salvation independent of baptism, is not to make us presume, or cause us to lead others to presume, that mercy will in a similar way be granted unto us or them in the twelfth hour, if, by our own neglect, we have, until too late, put it from us, whether through fear, unbelief, shame, pride, presumption, or any other cause: for since the decree went forth to preach the gospel to every creature, baptizing them, &c., we have no instance mentioned in the Scripture, either directly or by implication, of any unbaptized person being saved. But admitting that there may be individuals to whom God will, under similar circumstances, show the same mercy as he did to the thief; yet no man living can ascertain the cases where hope shall amount to certainty.

How much then does it behove us to exhort, with all affection, boldness, and fearlessness, our brethren in the flesh, “to give the more earnest heed to the things which they have heard, lest at any time they should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape if we neglect so great sal-

* Dan. xii. 13.

vation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs, and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?"*

Gentlemen, we are not to build our hope of salvation, or that of others, upon detached passages, but upon the broad basis of the whole tenor of the Will. Paul, in the 6th of Hebrews, speaks as follows; "Therefore, leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ (or the word of the beginning of Christ), let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith towards God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment." Here Paul "shows unto us the way of salvation," in directing us to the truths of the gospel in their due order. First repentance, then faith, then baptism, then laying on of hands, then the resurrection, and then eternal judgment. This is not an association of essentials with non-essentials, which some are pleased to denominate every doctrine and divine institution which is not to their taste; but it is an epitome of truths, all of the greatest moment; the very foundation of Christianity; baptism, as well as faith, being the basis of that Christianity which the apostles taught, and upon which all believers are now built, and constituted a holy temple for the Lord.

I do not know by what means the good work can be perfected to a final end, in those in whom the foundation according to the divine plan was never laid.† Paul besought Timothy to abide at Ephesus, that he might "charge some that they TEACH NO OTHER DOCTRINE."‡ And John, writing to the elect lady and her children, says, "This is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the DOCTRINE OF CHRIST, hath not God.—If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into

* Heb. ii. 1—4.

† See Phil. i. 6.

‡ 1 Tim. i. 3.

your house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds." *

It is not, Gentlemen, 'the preparation of a sovereign remedy that cures the disease, but the application of it;' it is not from defect of mercy in God, or salvation in Christ, that men perish, but for their obstinate rejection of both—their perseverance in unbelief. It is essential to the salvation of man that he understand and receive the testimony of the Testator as revealed in his Will; that he believe in him through that testimony, to the saving of his soul; and that he be OBEDIENT TO HIS COMMANDS. What this faith and obedience is, I shall here, by the gracious illumination of his Spirit, briefly state to you. It is coming unto God, believing "that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him;" † praying "unto God by him, who ever liveth to make intercession for us, for every blessing," ‡ and for the gift of his Spirit to enable us to search the Scriptures with our whole soul, in simplicity of heart, to take God at his word, without gainsaying or questioning the sincerity of his declarations which, whenever we so search, he promises that he will be found of us. § It is submitting ourselves "to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake; whether it be to the king as supreme; Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him;" honouring all men; loving the brotherhood; fearing God; honouring the king. || It is rendering "to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour. Owing no man any thing." ¶ It is manifesting our love to God, by a filial reverence, by a cheerful and willing obedience, not as a mere act of duty as to a strict, severe master, but in a pleasing acquiescence in the will of a gracious sovereign. It is believing in the Testator as our Saviour; that he died for us personally, as well as for the world collectively; that his atonement is all-sufficient for our salvation, independently of any works of our own. It is confessing our faith before many witnesses in his ordinance of baptism,

* 2 John 6, 9—11. † Heb. xi. 6. ‡ Heb. vii. 25. § Jer. xxix. 13, 14.

|| 1 Pet. ii. 13, 14, 17. ¶ Rom. xiii. 7, 8.

with sincerity of heart, according as we are instructed in his holy Will; and ever after walking worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called. It is guiding our conduct by the precepts of the Testator in his inspired Word; and, as often as we sit down at his table, typically feeding upon his body and blood, in remembrance and acknowledgment of the great sacrifice he made for our redemption. Thus worshipping, and being blessed with a knowledge of his Will, believers are assured of their acceptance, and that they are heirs to the eternal inheritance, according to the positive declaration and immutable promise of the Testator—"I go to prepare a place for you. And—I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am there ye may be also."*

This, Gentlemen, is our case; being, according to our views, the sum and substance of what the Will requires from the legatees. It is impossible that "the revelation of Jesus Christ can have so uncertain a meaning as the evidence of the plaintiffs' witnesses would lead you to believe; if it had, we should have nothing certain to guide us, but be subject to be "carried about with every wind of doctrine." "For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?"†

I can "of sincerity—in the sight of God," say, with the apostle of the Gentiles, that "my heart's desire, and prayer to God for" our opponents "is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God."‡ It is my fervent wish and prayer that the result of this trial may not only open the eyes of some of my countrymen to the delusive system now so prevalent, but that it may induce them to read the Will, and judge for themselves. A cursory view of it will convince them, that there was no occasion for this Trial, but that every man may be the judge of his own case, and know to an infallible certainty whether he is, or is not, entitled to the bequest. And

* John xiv. 2, 3.

† 1 Cor. xiv. 8.

‡ Rom. x. 1. 3.

further, that whosoever shall give his whole mind to the instruction afforded in the Will, and with purpose of heart cleave unto the Lord;* “praying to God always,” as did Cornelius; observing “all things whatsoever He has commanded;” shall find his title to heirship established, free from doubts and fears, as it is therein written; “That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”†

I shall now, Gentlemen, call one Witness, not to give evidence against the plaintiffs,—their own witnesses having in this matter anticipated him,—but to show you that we have had our hearts opened by the Lord to “believe to the saving of the soul:”‡ and that, having confessed our faith in the ordinance of baptism as required by the Testator, we are included in that saying of the Evangelist John, “As many as received him, to them gave he POWER (or the RIGHT or PRIVILEGE) to become the sons of God, EVEN TO THEM THAT BELIEVE ON HIS NAME. Which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”§ As it is written, in one of the last clauses of the Will, “Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life; and may enter in THROUGH THE GATES into the city. The learned and upright judge will, in his charge, point out to you, in an impartial manner, that which he sees necessary; and as for myself, Gentlemen, I shall not detain you longer, but leave my Witness to speak for himself; resting satisfied that you will consider this momentous subject with that calmness and impartiality which your duty demands. “Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask,”|| I leave our GLORIOUS CAUSE; knowing that your verdict, under His guidance, must carry conviction to every heart that is seriously desirous of being “led forth by the right way.”

* Acts xi. 23.

† Tit. iii. 7.

‡ Heb. x. 39.

§ John i. 12, 13.

|| Eph. iii. 20.

WITNESS FOR THE DEFENDANTS.

I, THE Witness for the Defendants, “think myself happy” to stand this day before you, my Lord, and the Gentlemen of the Jury, to give my evidence in this Great Cause; believing that I cannot better evince my gratitude to the Most High, for the innumerable mercies which I have received at His hands, and the blessedness of the gifts of which He has been graciously pleased to make me a partaker, than by thus coming forward to vindicate his cause, to uphold the honour of his name, and, to the extent of my ability, and according to the light and information which I have received from his Word, to set forth the dignity and importance of His Divine Institution, to maintain its integrity, and to rescue it from the contumely which the enemies of truth have heaped upon it; and further, by seeking to make it manifest that the observance of it is the appointed way which the great Testator has ordained that His name shall be confessed by all His faithful followers, who, through “evil report and good report, despite the sneers, the scoffs, and the censures of the world, “follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.”* And this I shall do with fervent charity and sincere good-will towards all men, “if by (this or) any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and—save some of them.”† Being, however, almost an entire stranger to all present, I consider that it will not be irrelevant, if, after the manner of the Apostle Paul, and some of the Witnesses on the other side, I give a brief account of myself, and of the way in which I have been led into the understanding of the Will.

I was born in the year 1774. Having been sent to sea by my own request at an early age, I received a very slender education, which will account for my defects of style, and

* Rev. xiv. 4.

† Rom. xi. 14.

errors of diction. I come not before you "with excellency of speech," nor "in the wisdom of men." Making, therefore, no pretension to eloquence; and seeking not the applause, I hope not to provoke the censure, of the grammarian. I consider, indeed, that oratory, is often employed rather for the depreciation than the maintenance of truth. I trust that, with the considerate, my deficiencies in these respects will neither disparage my arguments, nor detract from the merits of my statements; particularly when they reflect that the great Testator made use of men similarly unlearned to spread his gospel throughout the world.

The profession which I had chosen soon familiarised me with the vices to which seamen in particular, at that time, were addicted. The several masters with whom I sailed, were men of the most profligate character; and, by their conduct and example, encouraged every species of immorality. During the time that I followed this profession, I lived the most inconsiderate life imaginable. While we were lying in the West Indies, on two several voyages, I witnessed the greater portion of our crew, as well as of the crews of the ships lying around us, swept off by the yellow fever; and twice I was myself, by the same fever, brought to the verge of the grave: yet a thought of a future state of being never once entered my mind. Of me it might be said, with the greatest truth, that I literally lived without hope and "without God in the world."—A circumstance which occurred on one of our homeward-bound voyages, will set forth in a strong light the thoughtless lives which the seamen led. The master of the vessel having been seized with the yellow fever (as the officers and several of the crew had previously been), he was persuaded to leave the ship for another, then under convoy with us; and I, being the mate, was left in command. I was myself, at the time, worn down by the effects of that malignant disorder; the second mate was unable to leave his bed from the same cause; the number of the crew was reduced by death, and the strength of the survivors so weakened, that we could scarcely work the ship. In this

state of things a man died, and was sewed up in his hammock, preparatory to committing his remains to the deep. I ordered the body to be brought to the gang-way, for the purpose of having the usual form of prayer read over it, when something ludicrous so much excited the mirth of the men engaged in carrying it, that they all burst into a loud fit of laughter, and nearly let the corpse fall upon the deck. Seeing their levity, and feeling at the same time that it would be too palpable a mockery to read the service in the presence of people in such a state of mind, I told them to throw the body overboard without further ceremony. This circumstance shows, that although we saw our ship's company drop off one after another, and death staring the remainder in the face, and waiting at our own doors, we were not brought to bestow one serious thought upon the subject.

After my arrival in port, I was so reduced by fatigue and disease, that I was confined to my bed for several weeks; during which time the second mate died, and three months elapsed before I was capable of attending to any business. But these near escapes from death made no impression upon my mind; I never bestowed a thought upon sacred things, nor even once returned thanks for my almost miraculous preservation.

My health being nearly restored, I obtained the command of a vessel, and after making a number of voyages to and from the West Indies, I was taken, on my passage home, by a French privateer, made a prisoner of war, landed at Bordeaux, and marched off to Verdun, a place renowned for its vices. There I remained for four years and a half, until, seeing no prospect of an exchange of prisoners, I determined if possible to effect my escape. In descending the ramparts of the citadel where I had been *confined*, I fell from a height of from forty to fifty feet; but though much bruised by the fall, I and three others who accompanied me were enabled to get out of the fosse, and away from the fortress, though at a slow pace, principally owing to one of the party having in his fall sprained both his ancles. We were

retaken on the eleventh night after our escape, and brought back; and, after a confinement of seven days in the round tower within the citadel, our hands and feet secured in irons, we were sent off to the strong fortress of Bitché. From this place also, I and some others effected our escape—were taken a second time—brought back, and put in *close* confinement, with a sentinel placed over us. Our spirits, however, remained undaunted; and being in no way cast down by the disappointment, we made a third attempt, when five of us ultimately succeeded in making our escape, leaving in the ditch one of our companions in the perilous undertaking, who had broken his leg in dropping from the top of the outwork. This time we evaded the vigilance of our pursuers, crossed the Rhine a little below Strasburg—marched through Baden, Wirtemberg, and Bavaria—obtained passports at Saltsburg for Trieste—and, after a fatiguing march of twenty-nine days, obtained the cheering sight of the green sea. We all finally arrived safe at home, myself after an absence of six years (five and a quarter of which were passed in captivity), with a heart if possible harder and more insensible than when I left it.

After some time I went out to Buenos Ayres in a mercantile capacity, but returned disappointed, after being absent two years. Under more favourable circumstances, however, I repaired thither a second time, and succeeded to my wishes; having acquired the means of maintaining myself without much bodily or mental labour, beyond which I had no wish. This was to have brought with it, in my estimation at that time, all the happiness I was capable of enjoying, and indeed all that I was looking for. I was then drawing near to my fortieth year, without having ever had one serious thought of the object of my being. My case in this respect is no uncommon one; at least so far as my experience enables me to judge. My companions were all, like myself, members of the Church of England; we had all been christened in our infancy, as we were informed, and by consequence made the members of Christ, the children of God, and heirs of the kingdom of heaven; for so it is declared in the

catechism taught by that Church, which Church is affirmed by many of her members (men distinguished for their zeal, learning, and piety) to be 'framed after the pure and primitive rule of the apostles.'

How far the life that I had led will justify such doctrines, I leave those to determine who teach them, and affirm that they are derived from the Word of God. To me, however, they appear to tend to the destruction of the souls of men, and are quite at variance with the Scriptures.

In my own particular case, the Lord dealt most mercifully with me; he did not reward me according to my iniquities, which I so richly merited at his hands; but he spared my life, and not only gave me space for, but inclined my heart to repentance. But how many of my equally thoughtless and abandoned companions did I see cut off in the midst of their mad career, and sent to reap the bitter fruit of their doings. And what did their christening avail them? Were they constituted by it children of God? Were they regenerated? Were their hearts renewed and purified from the pollution of sin; seeing that they were "cut off in their own wickedness"? To express the most distant possibility that such could be the case, would be an insult to the Most High; for He has declared that "without holiness no man shall see the Lord."*

I now come to that part of my life when the first serious reflection entered into my mind; when I awoke as from a dream, and asked myself the question, To what purpose have I been living, and what will be the end of the career that I am now pursuing? I am not aware of any occurrence that thus awakened me from my lethargy; it appeared spontaneous, effected independently of any apparent cause, but, influenced, doubtless, by a power beyond myself, even by the Holy Spirit, to whose promises and threatenings, as revealed in the Will, I had hitherto turned a deaf ear. The enquiry led immediately to the discovery that I had wandered far from the fountain of bliss, and that I was destitute of every thing that could confer true happiness; and though I cannot

* Heb. xii. 14.

say that the discovery caused me any immediate serious alarm, yet I never afterwards lost the sense of my forlorn condition. From that time I began to pray and read the Scriptures, though more from a mistaken sense of duty, than from a sincere desire to attain to the knowledge which they are calculated to impart.

Soon after this circumstance occurred, I returned to Liverpool, and married. Then I deemed it necessary, according to custom, to attend some place of worship, and had to make my selection from the number that surrounded me. In my youth, I had been in the habit of attending Church with my father, who professed to belong to that community. He, I have been informed, had me christened; but who my sponsors were, I do not know. I well recollect that I was taught the Catechism, the Creed, &c. As I grew older, my partiality for my mother induced me generally to accompany her to a small Baptist chapel, of the Church assembling in which she afterwards became a worthy member. Had she attended the Church of England, I should, at that time, unquestionably have given it the preference, for the people with whom she associated were not to my taste—their principles were too exclusive for me—I considered them narrow-minded; besides which, there was very little either in their manner or habits congenial to my then mode of life, very little to induce me to desire much further intimacy with them. However, I continued my attendance at chapel. I was, as I have before mentioned, already impressed with the importance of sacred things, and in time I began to listen with more attention. The strain of the minister's discourses was chiefly the recommendation of the Scriptures to the attention of his audience. These he exhorted them to make the paramount study of their lives, almost to the exclusion of every other book, and certainly to that of every authority which might stand opposed to the plain and simple testimony of the Divine Record. I then became a more diligent enquirer after the truth—I studied the Word of God with attention, and sought by prayer for the illumination of the Spirit, to “guide me into all truth.” By little and little the light broke in upon me,

and I began, as it is said of the blind man whose eyes the Lord had touched, to "see men as trees walking."

I saw, by the Will, that the grace of God is freely extended to every one who is sincerely desirous of possessing it; and that I was as particularly invited to partake of its blessings as if there had not been another man upon the earth. I read therein as follows; "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If ANY man thirst, let him come unto me and drink."* "And the Spirit and the bride say *Come*—And let him that heareth say *Come*—And WHOSOEVER WILL let him take of the water of life freely."† "And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out."‡ I knew that I had destroyed myself, and that the imagination of my heart had been evil from my youth;§ yet I saw clearly that, notwithstanding my innumerable transgressions, and my habitual neglect of the Will, "having forsaken God, and lightly esteemed the Rock of my salvation,"|| I was not only invited to return, but that words were put into my mouth, whereby to address Him whom I had so grievously offended; and this, too, followed with the most gracious promises. "O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity. Take with you words, and turn to the Lord: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips—I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him."¶ Again, "Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord: and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you: for I am merciful, saith the Lord, and I will not keep anger for ever. Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God."** "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."†† "Let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me; and he shall make peace with me."‡‡ And again, "When the

* John vii. 37.

† Rev. xxii. 17.

‡ John vi. 37.

§ Gen. viii. 21.

|| Deut. xxxii. 15.

¶ Hos. xiv. 1, 2, 4.

** Jer. iii. 12, 13.

†† Isa. i. 18.

‡‡ Isa. xxvii. 5.

poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them.”* “For thus saith the Lord unto the house of Israel, Seek ye me, and ye shall live.”† “And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.”‡

Now, although I was clearly convinced of my being included in all these gracious promises, I did not wholly and heartily embrace them. There was still a looking back, while I felt a disposition to put my hand to the plough. About that time an accident happened to me, which might have deprived me of life. One evening, after dark, as I was sitting alone upon one end of the swing-bridge of the canal at Litherland, a flat in passing through, struck against the other end, and threw me off with violence, my head striking against the stone-work at the side of the canal, from whence I fell into the water. I received a severe shock, but had sufficient strength to get upon the bank; the concussion, however, deprived me of the full possession of my faculties for several hours. Now I felt convinced, in my own experience, of the truth of what David said of himself to Jonathan, “Truly, as the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, there is but a step between me and death.” This opened my eyes more than ever to the folly and danger of procrastination; and the following passages of Scripture were recalled to my mind with all their force; “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might;” “Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.”§ It then became with me a matter of life and death (both of which were set impressively before me), and I sought the Lord with greater fervency; he “answered me, and set me in a large place.”|| enabling me to embrace the blessings “which he hath promised to them that love him.”¶ “What,” then I asked myself, “shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me?” The Psalmist gives the response; “I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the

* Isa. xli. 17.
§ 2 Cor. vi. 2.

† Amos v. 4.
|| Psa. cxviii. 5.

‡ Jer. xxix. 13.
¶ James ii. 5.

Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now, in the presence of all his people.”* I had not studied the Will to so little purpose as not to know what was required of me under these circumstances; how my vows were to be paid in “the assembly of the saints;” it being therein clearly stated, that “He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved.” Paul, before his conversion, called himself the chief of sinners. I knew myself to be, if not the chief, yet amongst the chief of sinners—our cases were in some sort similar. What therefore Ananias said to him, I felt as if addressed to myself; “And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”†

I was fully convinced that the ordinance of baptism could not of itself confer any “benefit,” nor alter my position in the sight of God. But at the same time I was as fully convinced that while I disregarded it, I could not appropriate to myself the blessings promised to “all them that obey him.”‡ I saw that, according to the commission, the observance of this ordinance was required of me; and that it was necessary I should regard it; otherwise I could not truly say, “I have respect unto all thy commandments.”§ I was persuaded, also, that no man could be a disciple of Christ who lived in the habitual neglect of any of his precepts; for he says, “He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.”|| And again, “Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.”¶

My eyes were now opened to see that I could not expect to be further enlightened while I remained unbaptized. Indeed my conscience smote me when I prayed to be further led into “the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven,” being sensible that I was not “giving unto the Lord glory” while I neglected to make an open profession of my faith in Christ

* Psa. cxvi. 12—14.

† Acts xxii. 16.

‡ Heb. v. 9.

§ Psa. cxix. 6.

|| John xiv. 21.

¶ Rev. xxii. 14.

in the way of his appointment. Then came the struggle; How am I to summon courage to make a public confession of my sins, and profess my faith before the Church and the congregation? This I knew I ought to do, from a sense of gratitude for the benefits I had received, as well as from an understanding that I could not show forth the praise of the Lord in a way acceptable to him, except by pursuing the course marked out for me by himself; and that I could not enter upon that course in any other way; yet a false sense of shame, and a knowledge of the great importance and solemnity of the ordinance, caused me to hesitate. I felt persuaded that my heart was "right in the sight of God;"* still I was diffident of being able so to express my faith as to give satisfaction, not being gifted with a ready utterance. To me it appeared a most momentous thing to go before the Church, though composed of a few plain people only—a fiery trial, which I dreaded yet desired: for the Scripture was ever before me, "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels."† I was instructed, that although I had no strength in myself, there was strength promised to me; "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."‡ I was also instructed, that to be fully sensible of my own weakness, and my utter inability to relieve myself, was the sure way to lead me to look to God for his promised support; as it is stated by the Apostle, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness."§ I was not harassed with the dread of making shipwreck of faith and of a good conscience;|| being assured by the great Shepherd that in following him I should be safe. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."¶ I was

* Acts viii. 21.
§ 2 Cor. xii. 9.

† * Luke ix. 26.
|| 1 Tim. i. 19.

‡ Isa. xli. 10.
¶ John x. 27, 28.

further convinced that I had nothing to fear if I gave myself up entirely to his keeping: and a secret impulse which I could not resist urged me forward, and determined me to confess my Lord according to the way of his appointment; after the example of those “that have received his testimony.”

To this period I had kept secret my internal struggles, having never communicated my thoughts to, or consulted, *any one*. But being drawn with the “cords of a man, with bands of love;”* my rebellious heart subdued, and made “willing in the day of His power;”† I at length communicated my desire to go before the Church, and in so doing felt a satisfaction and ease of mind that I had never before experienced. It was then that I was filled “with all joy and peace in believing.”‡ It was then that what I previously thought a task—a matter to be performed as an act of duty, became the desire of my soul; and I deemed it my highest honour, my most exalted privilege, to be permitted to confess his name, who had done such great things for me. “I will speak of thy testimonies also before kings, and will not be ashamed.”§ “Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul.”||

After mature deliberation, the members of the Church consented to hear me; they were satisfied with my profession made to them in private; and on the Lord’s day I made a public confession of my sins, professing my faith in the Son of God before the whole congregation, and was baptized in due form and order; the minister laying hands on me, in faith of a further illumination of the Holy Spirit. I was thus united to the Church, received into fellowship, and joined with my fellow-believers in a further confession of our faith in the Lord in his divine institution of the Supper, the observance of which he has appointed until “he shall appear the second time.” “For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death till he come.”¶

* Hos. xi. 4.

§ Ps. cxix. 46.

† Ps. cx. 3.

|| Ps. lxvi. 16.

‡ Rom. xv. 13.

¶ 1 Cor. xi. 26.

Symbolically eating his flesh, and drinking his blood, in this ordinance, we manifest, by a lively figure, that it is upon him, and through him, and by him that we live. For "the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."*

Ever since that period, I have enjoyed uninterrupted tranquillity of mind, and perfect peace. Having been inducted into the fold of Christ, I am seeking to "be filled with the knowledge of his will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding,"†—to be made more conformable to his image. I know that in MANY THINGS I offend, that I come exceedingly short IN ALL, and that I bring VERY LITTLE GLORY TO HIS NAME. Yet as we find, in the Scriptures, that these or similar declarations were made by the sincere followers of the Lord, my confidence in him is not disturbed. I do not question my salvation; nor have I *any* desponding thoughts. I am assured that I love the name of the Lord, and that I desire to live to his glory; his Spirit bearing witness with my spirit that I am born of God.‡ And although my footsteps may slip, I have the comforting assurance of his Word, that "the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand."§ Having no confidence in the flesh, I am convinced that I can be preserved from falling only by a watchful and godly jealousy of myself; a conscientious regard to all my heavenly Father's precepts, and a meek and humble walking before him, in full reliance upon his faithful promises; being free from presumption and false confidence on the one hand, and from *distrust*, under the *semblance* of modesty, on the other. "He abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself;" upon his word do I hope, and here I rest secure.

Having entered into the sheep-fold by the door appointed by the Great Shepherd, and not, as a thief or a robber,

* Gal. ii. 20. † Col. i. 9. ‡ See Rom. viii. 16. § Psa. xxxvii. 23, 24.

climbed up some other way, I feel myself completely under his protection, and can go in and out and find pasture; enjoying "the earnest of my inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."*

* Eph. i. 14.

THE JUDGE.

GENTLEMEN OF THE JURY,

As one of the Judges of the realm, it has fallen to me to sit here during the pleadings in this important cause—a cause involving not a subject of a temporal nature, but one of infinite moment—the eternal state of all the human race, to whom the Testator, in his great goodness and mercy, has sent his Will. “He that hath ears to hear, let him hear;”^{*} and according as we hear the “sayings” of the Testator, and do them, or do them not, so we shall be rendered eternally happy, or eternally miserable.[†] This consideration should solemnize our minds, and operate as a check upon any thing bordering on levity; which, I am sorry to say, has been occasionally manifested during the trial.

Gentlemen, as becometh my responsible station while sitting upon this bench, I have attended to all that has been advanced on both sides of the question; and, as far as I know my own mind, without partiality or prejudice as affecting either party. And I am persuaded that you have listened with the same attention, and with minds as free from bias as my own.

On the one side you have heard the subject argued by many of the most distinguished men of our own country, and also by one of a distant people, highly esteemed among us; men celebrated for their great learning, profound judgment, acuteness, and deep research—who have left no object unexplored that could throw light upon the cause; and who, wherever they have found a passage in the Will which in their judgment was obscure, ambiguous, or uncertain, have endeavoured to elucidate it by an appeal to authorities of ancient date, and enquiries into the manners

^{*} Matt. xi. 15.

[†] See Matt. vii. 24—27.

and customs of times long past. They contend that this is the only true way of arriving at a satisfactory conclusion in all cases of difficulty ; and that the light thus thrown upon ancient practice may be safely followed by Christians of the present day. It must be evident to you, Gentlemen, and to every one in this Court, that the Plaintiffs' Witnesses have manifested the greatest ingenuity and acumen, laying hold of every incident that appeared in their favour ; and that, on this side of the question, nothing new, more convincing, or more conclusive, can be expected or elicited—that, in fact, the subject has been completely exhausted.

On the other side, the Defendants acknowledge that they are unlettered men ; that with respect to human learning, and deep research into the works of ancient authors, they do not stand upon such high ground as the Plaintiffs ; and we have had convincing proof that what little they know of these subjects, they have not thought proper to bring forward in support of their cause, contenting themselves with appealing exclusively to the Will ; contending that the “way of salvation” is therein pointed out in characters so “plain” and intelligible, “that he may run that readeth it.”* Their arguments and statements have all been drawn from it alone ; and they contend that it ought to be studied now as if it had only been the publication of yesterday ;—that it is as easy to be understood by the people of the present time, as it was by those to whom it was first preached ;—that it is sufficient of itself to “shew” unto every man “the path of life,” to furnish him with all the knowledge which is needful for him, and which, if sought for in a spirit of humility, with fervent prayer, and a firm reliance upon the promises it contains, will assuredly lead him to the mansions of eternal glory.

“He that rejecteth me (says the Testator), and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him ; the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him at the last day.”† Hence it must be manifest to you all, Gentlemen, that his “word” overrules my authority, and consequently renders my judg-

* Hab. ii. 2.

† John xii. 48.

ment and your verdict unnecessary. It must also be manifest to every considerate person who has heard, or who may hereafter read a report of this trial; that however just your verdict and our judgment might be, it cannot exonerate any individual from examining the provisions of the Will with the same diligence as if this trial had never taken place; he must still judge for himself; for no profitable knowledge can be obtained but by deep searching into, close examination of, and diligent application to, the divine testimony, taking nothing upon the credit or authority of any man or set of men. By a careful observance of the rules laid down, he must make all the knowledge it contains his own.

Seeing, then, that this cause is of such tremendous moment, and that it must of necessity be brought before a higher tribunal, where "every one of us shall give an account of himself to God,"* the GREAT JUDGE, who will himself "set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left;"† I shall, with the permission of the parties interested, dismiss the court, without giving judgment, or calling for your verdict, beseeching every individual to ask himself this important question, Have I searched the Will as for hid treasures, and am I, through faith in, and humble dependence upon, its Divine Author, accompanied by a sincere, meek, and lowly walking in his ways, and a strict observance of his precepts, laws, and ordinances, PREPARED TO STAND BEFORE "THE SON OF MAN," WHEN HE SHALL "SIT UPON THE THRONE OF HIS GLORY?"‡

* Rom. xiv. 12.

† Matt. xxv. 33.

‡ Matt. xxv. 31.

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